

THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE  
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THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

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ORIENTAL INSTITUTE COMMUNICATIONS

*Edited by*

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**EXCAVATIONS AT ANCIENT THEBES**  
**1930/31**

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

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THE BAKER & TAYLOR COMPANY  
NEW YORK

THE CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS  
LONDON

THE MARUZEN-KABUSHIKI-KAISHA  
TOKYO, OSAKA, KYOTO, FUKUOKA, SENDAI

THE COMMERCIAL PRESS, LIMITED  
SHANGHAI



THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE *of* THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO  
ORIENTAL INSTITUTE COMMUNICATIONS, NO. 15

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EXCAVATIONS  
AT ANCIENT THEBES  
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*By*  
UVO HÖLSCHER



Internet publication of this work was made possible with the  
generous support of Misty and Lewis Gruber

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CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

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CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, U.S.A.

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INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

Our task in our fourth season of excavation at Medinet Habu, 1930/31, was fourfold. In the first place, we desired to expose the western part of the Ramses III area, which lies behind the Great Temple. Next, it was necessary to excavate more completely the district in front of the east wall, where in the previous year we had found a small Coptic church. Thirdly, the district to the north of the Ramses III area, outside the Great Girdle Wall, had to be investigated by a test excavation. Finally, we were permitted to excavate and study the palace, the magazines, and adjoining structures in the Ramesseum, in order to answer as well as possible certain questions which had arisen at Medinet Habu. Our knowledge that these buildings of the previous century had served as models for those at Medinet Habu convinced us that they were capable of solving certain of our problems.

As in the previous year, the author was ably assisted by Herr Hans Steckeweh, who had direct oversight of the excavation work. Herr Siegfried Heise devoted his time especially to the drawing and study of Coptic and later buildings, and Mr. Laurence Woolman handled the individual problems of the Fortified Gate. The photographic work was continued by Herr Leichter; and the registration of the finds and photographs, as well as other valuable assistance, was undertaken by Mrs. Keith C. Seele. The co-operation of all these who were associated with me I wish gratefully to acknowledge.

The excavation did not run quite so undisturbed a course as in former years. Growing unemployment in the overpopulated land led to an increase in crime. Ultimately the police, in co-operation with the army, interfered with energetic and successful steps for its suppression in our immediate vicinity. Twice we were forced to turn over to the police instigators of unrest. On one of these occasions a foreman was dangerously injured and had to be removed to the hospital in Cairo. Fortunately, after long and tedious special treatment he was dismissed as fully recovered and is now able to perform his duties as well as ever.

In the summer months, spent away from Egypt, our drawings were prepared and other scientific work was completed in preparation for the coming publication.

<sup>1</sup> The author's thanks are due to Mrs. Keith C. Seele for her translation of his German manuscript.

## MEDINET HABU

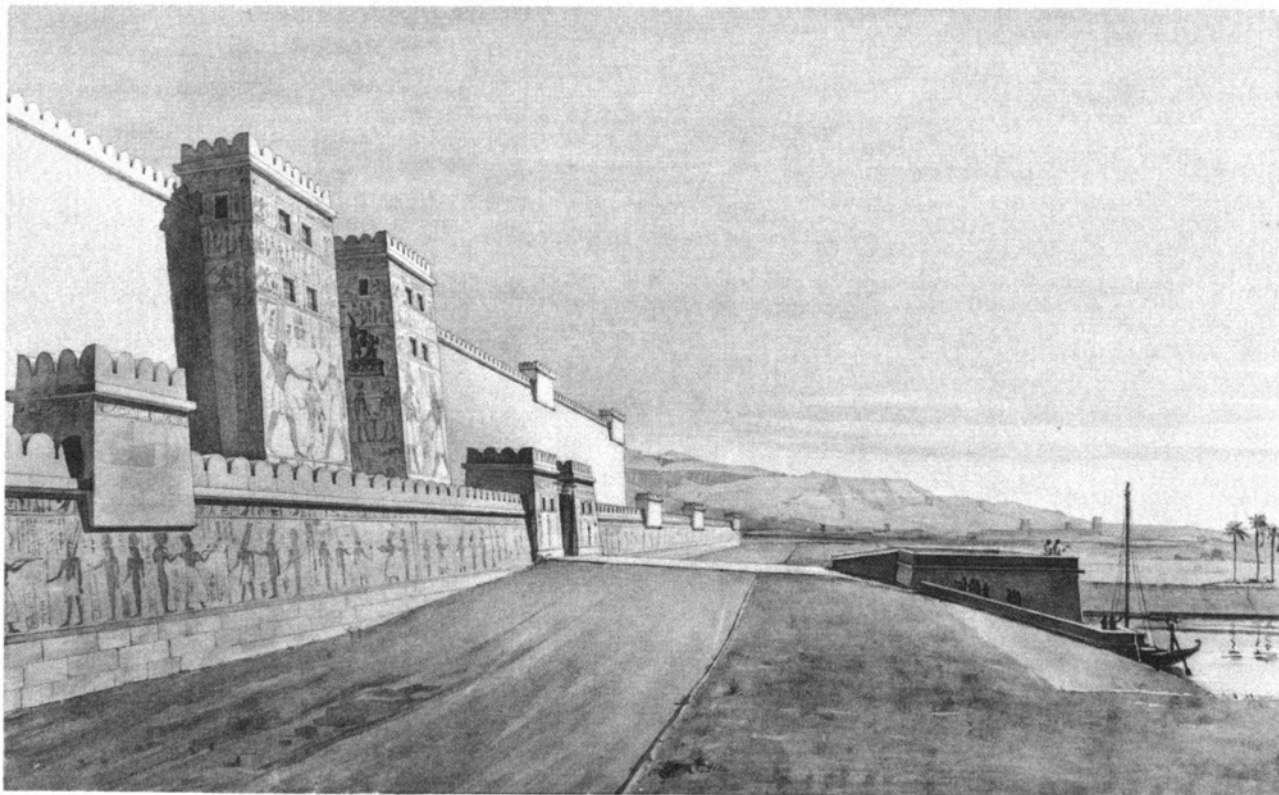
## THE GENERAL PLAN OF THE TEMPLE AREA OF RAMSES III

As explained in previous reports (*OIC* Nos. 5, 7, and 10) and as seen in Figure 1, the Great Temple of Amon, forming the central point in the area, was surrounded by both an inner and an outer wall. The inner wall, which proceeds from the pylon of the temple and is identified by the protruding bases of towers that appear at regular intervals, incloses the royal palace, the magazines, and other important structures.

Originally the temple plan of Ramses III was limited to this inner area, which contained all that was essential to a great royal temple on the west side of Thebes, so far as we are able to judge from the temple plans of Seti I, Ramses II, and Merneptah. Only toward the end of his reign did Ramses III enlarge the area by means of the Great Girdle Wall (Plate I), which united the respective parts into a whole and lent to the temple area of Medinet Habu its characteristic fortresslike appearance. In the outer portion lay the rows of houses of the temple attendants, the service and administration buildings, and a park with a pool to provide water for man and beast and to irrigate the trees and shrubs. Also included in this outer portion was the older Small Temple of the 18th dynasty, the axis of which diverges considerably from that of the Great Temple.

The Inner Inclosure Wall, like all such walls, was constructed of mud brick, its base sloping toward the exterior. The towers, which projected 2.50 meters beyond the wall itself, were unquestionably higher than the latter. On the basis of representations of such walls (cf. *OIC* No. 7, Fig. 4) we assume a crenelated top. As yet we have found no positive evidence of the stairways which must have provided access to the summit of the wall.

The Great Girdle Wall (Fig. 2) was about twice as thick as the Inner Inclosure Wall and about 18 meters high. Along its inner side a street 1-3 meters higher than the inclosed space served in case of emergency to move the garrison promptly to threatened points.



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MAIN ENTRANCE, QUAY, AND EAST WALL OF THE FORTIFIED TEMPLE AREA OF MEDINET HABU  
RECONSTRUCTION





## GENERAL PLAN OF TEMPLE AREA OF RAMSES III

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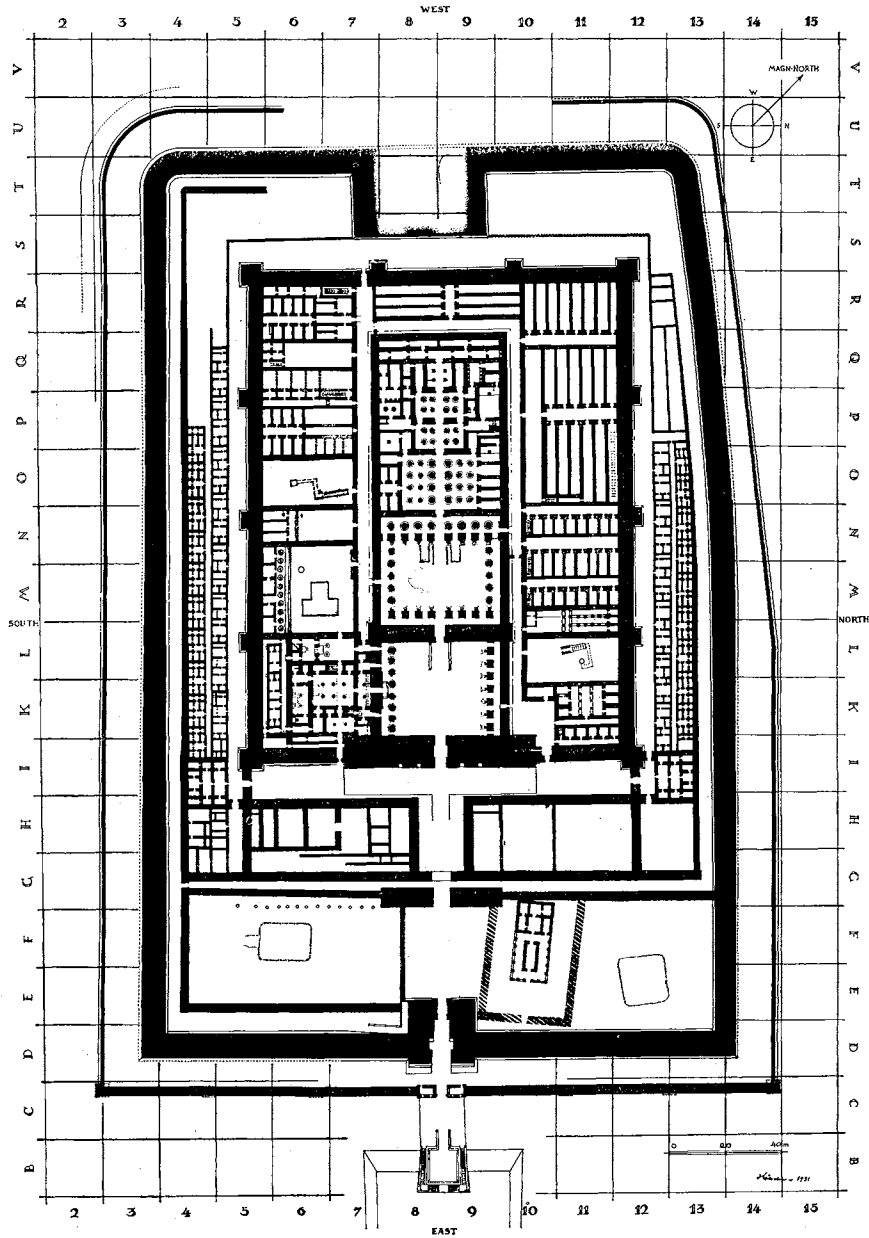


FIG. 1.—Ground plan of the temple of Ramses III at Medinet Habu after the season of 1930/31. Only the west tower of the Great Girdle Wall is still to be cleared.

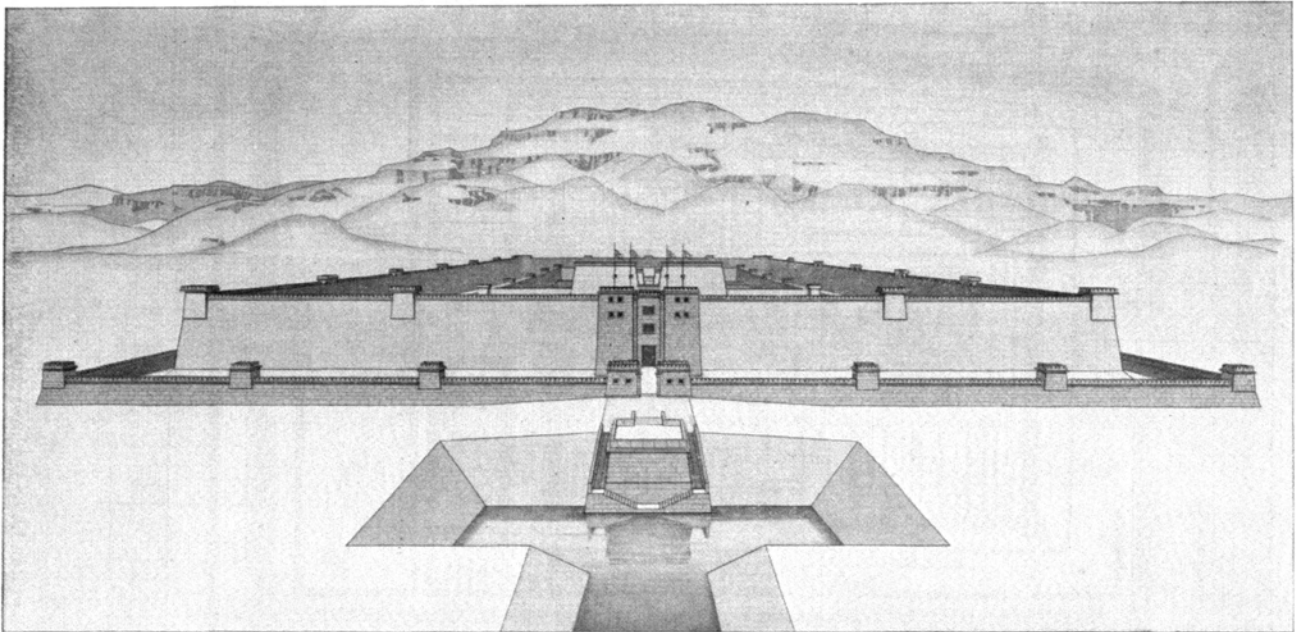


FIG. 2.—The fortified temple area of Ramses III at Medinet Habu. Reconstruction

Outside of the Great Girdle Wall, about 12 meters from it, was situated a low outer wall faced with stone (but only on the side toward the cultivation). Part of this wall is still preserved to its full height, including its crenelated top. One can recognize the remains of the turrets which once straddled the walls.

We may suppose that the Great Girdle Wall also possessed such turrets, though proof of their presence has not survived. Since, however, all the known representations of similar fortification walls reveal

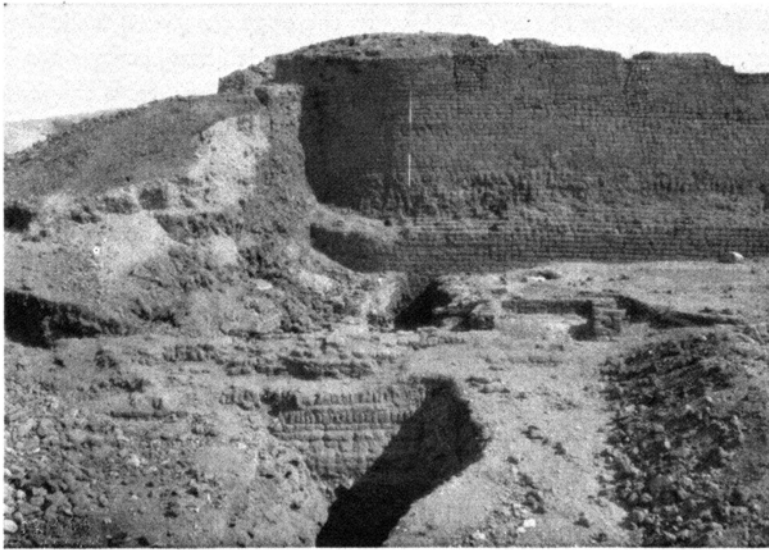


FIG. 3.—The rounded southwest corner of the Great Girdle Wall

towers of this kind, and since they have been verified on the other two walls, it would appear highly probable that the Great Girdle Wall also had them. The east corners of both the Great Girdle Wall and the Outer Wall are square, whereas those on the west are rounded (Fig. 3). At the western corners a shallow ditch was found in front of the Outer Wall, but whether this belonged to the original plan or was a later addition is not yet clear.

As the plan (Fig. 1) shows, the temple area as a whole is almost perfectly rectangular and symmetrical. The west half of the north wall, however, bends noticeably toward the south, forming an obtuse angle.

This feature led us to conjecture that the presence of an older temple still in use at the time of Ramses III had had to be taken into consideration when that king sought to enlarge his temple by the construction of the Great Girdle Wall. The axis of this earlier temple appeared to diverge about 6 degrees from that of the Great Temple. A test excavation did indeed bring to light a structure built about 1350 B.C. by King Eye and usurped by his successor Harmhab. A more detailed discussion of it appears on pages 47-53.

The Ramses III area was entered through the well known Fortified Gate in the center of the east side. In the opposite (west) wall, however, we found a gigantic core of mud brick which had been erected at the same time as the Great Girdle Wall, to judge both from the manner in which the bricks were laid and from the fact that the sloping base of the wall surrounds the core. As all the streets sloped upward toward this great structure, it seemed likely that it had contained stairways or ramps leading to the top of the Great Girdle Wall. Had there been another gate here? Unfortunately we could not yet solve these interesting and important questions, for it was precisely on this spot that our excavation house stood. Not until after its removal at the end of the season could this last interest-compelling structure at Medinet Habu be fully excavated and studied.

#### THE QUAY

In 1929/30 we had already partially exposed a quay before the Fortified Gate, when we struck the side of a stairway which must have led down to the water. The height of the underground water during the winter made it impossible to pursue further the problem of this particular site; but a favorable opportunity to excavate to lower levels arose during June and July, 1930, when excavation in Egypt is usually at a standstill on account of the heat. Since the new permanent headquarters of the Oriental Institute in Egypt were being erected, the architect, Mr. L. Le Grande Hunter, was in Luxor during the entire summer. He kindly undertook to investigate our problem. Our trusted reis, Sharid Mohamed Mansur, with ten men and twenty boys did the work, while Mr. Hunter gave the necessary oversight and recorded the results in a drawing. In this way nearly the entire quay was recovered, as may be seen in Figure 2 and Plate I.

A similar quay in front of the temple of Amon at Karnak is well known, but appears not to have been completely investigated, as the steps which must have led to the water have not been found. There have, however, been discovered on the quay wall numerous records of high Nile levels, dating from the 21st to the 26th dynasty. On the quay at Medinet Habu we found a still older high water record, which tells us that in the seventh year of Ramses IX (before 1100 B.C.) the inundation reached a height of about 75.45 meters above sea-level. The water on that occasion, therefore, rose almost to the height of the original pavement at the head of the stairs. The stairway which descended beside the quay was traced to a depth of 6 meters below the platform. We may assume that it continued downward along the front of the quay for perhaps a meter more and that the lowest water level in the canal was then at least 7-8 meters below the platform of the quay.

Whither did this canal lead? Without doubt, to the Nile; for it must have connected the Ramses temple with the natural water highway of the country. Its exact direction, however, we could not determine, as the canal has of course been choked with mud for thousands of years. Traces of it certainly lie concealed under the almost 3 meters of soil that have accumulated since the time of Ramses III. We may assume that the canal took the shortest course to the river and that it ran in the axis of the temple itself as a continuation of the main thoroughfare. The canal thus formed the first part of the processional way from the Nile, that is, from the temples of Amon at Karnak and Luxor to that at Medinet Habu. One is reminded of the so-called "valley temples" of the Old Kingdom pyramid-builders, where, as is well known, one finds at the edge of the cultivation a quay and gateway from which a covered ascent leads to the temple and the pyramid behind it. It is possible to imagine that similar processional ways led to the mortuary temples of the Empire also, and that the canals represented that part of the way which lay in the area subject to inundation. Up to the present time the canal at Medinet Habu is the only one the existence of which has been proved, though one suspects the presence of another before the great temple of Amon at Karnak. But processional roads on the desert may be clearly traced at Deir el-Bahri, where they were laid out in imposing style to lead from

both the temple of Hatshepsut and that of the Mentuhoteps over a distance of about three-quarters of a mile to the cultivation.

The quay formed the junction of waterway and ascending road. A canal which led to the temple of Thutmose III in Thebes is represented in the tomb of Khonsu (No. 31, Sheikh 'Abd el-Kurna, time of Ramses II).<sup>1</sup> The canal ends in a T, so that the ships can turn and dock. Boats are sailing on the water; one of them bears a statue of the king, probably returning to his mortuary temple from the temple of Amon at Karnak. Priests stand on the quay and offer incense to

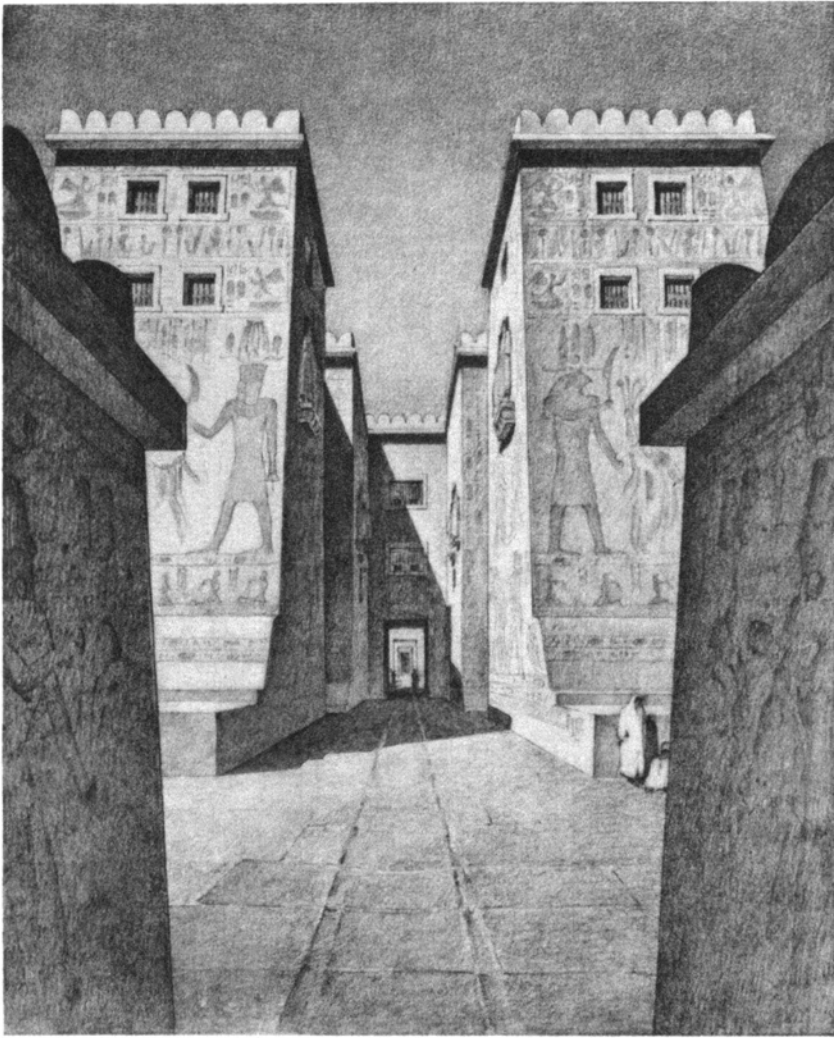


FIG. 4.—Scene in the tomb of Amenmose at Kurna, showing the canal and the quay in front of the temple of Amenhotep I. (Photograph by the Egyptian Expedition of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.)

the arriving statue. In the tomb of Amenmose (No. 19, Dirā' Abū'l-Naga, beginning of 19th dynasty) there is a representation of a canal and quay before the temple of Amenhotep I (Fig. 4).<sup>2</sup> We are, therefore, safe in concluding that a canal led to every one of the great royal temples on the west side of Thebes. But the canals undoubtedly fell into ruin even more rapidly than did the temples themselves and were in time completely choked with mud and leveled off by the annual inundation. They had, however, undoubtedly been necessary for transport of the heavy stones during the building of the temples and later as the processional routes for the divine and royal statues.

<sup>1</sup> Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altaegyptischen Kulturgeschichte* I, Pls. 128–29.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the representation of the canal in front of the temple of Amon at Karnak, as shown in the tomb of Neferhotep (No. 49, Sheikh 'Abd el-Kurna, beginning of the 19th dynasty; Wreszinski, *Atlas* I, Pl. 171). There one sees that the canal begins at the Nile and ends at the temple.



*Printed in Germany*

THE FORTIFIED GATE OF MEDINET HABU  
RECONSTRUCTION





The quay of Medinet Habu was, then, a vital detail of the original plan of Ramses III. It was connected with the temple by a paved street which has been found about 1 meter below the pavement of the Fortified Gate.

#### THE FORTIFIED GATE

The Fortified Gate (Fig. 5) is one of the most interesting buildings of ancient Egypt. It has often been pictured, and years ago I published a special study of it.<sup>1</sup> In the course of this season's excavation it has been considered anew and much more fully than was possible in the past, because this time practically every nook of the high building was accessible with ladders and scaffolding. As one can see from Figure 6, the Fortified Gate was a cubical building which was inserted into the Great Girdle Wall. It was designated by the Syrian name *migdol*. The actual gateway has been pushed toward the rear—that is, toward the west—so that a narrow inner court remains which corresponds to the *Zwinger* of medieval German fortifications; for in such a court (Plate II) the attacking enemy was to be overwhelmed by missiles from all sides and so “vanquished.”

In Egypt, where extraordinarily few fortifications have been preserved, we have no other example of a fortified gate. That does not necessarily mean, however, that others did not exist. Especially at the frontiers, in the Delta and in Lower Nubia, there must have been similar structures, ruins of which will perhaps later be recognized.<sup>2</sup>

The Fortified Gate of Medinet Habu consisted, like the adjoining Great Girdle Wall, of unburned bricks. Only the two towers projecting eastward beyond the line of the wall, the towering gateway, drawn back toward the west, and the sides of the intervening *Zwinger* court are built of mighty blocks of sandstone (cf. Fig. 5). The latter still remain comparatively well preserved, though the mud-brick portions of the fortification had been destroyed and largely removed before 700 B.C.

Simple as its ground plan appears (cf. Fig. 6), the inner contour of the Fortified Gate is very complex. One sees that the *Zwinger* is cruci-

<sup>1</sup> *Das Hohe Tor von Medinet Habu* (12. Wiss. Veröff. der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft; Leipzig, 1910).

<sup>2</sup> A gateway of similar ground plan and measurements may be seen in the city of “Raamses”; cf. W. M. F. Petrie, *Hyksos and Israelite Cities* (London, 1906) Pl. XXXV and p. 30.

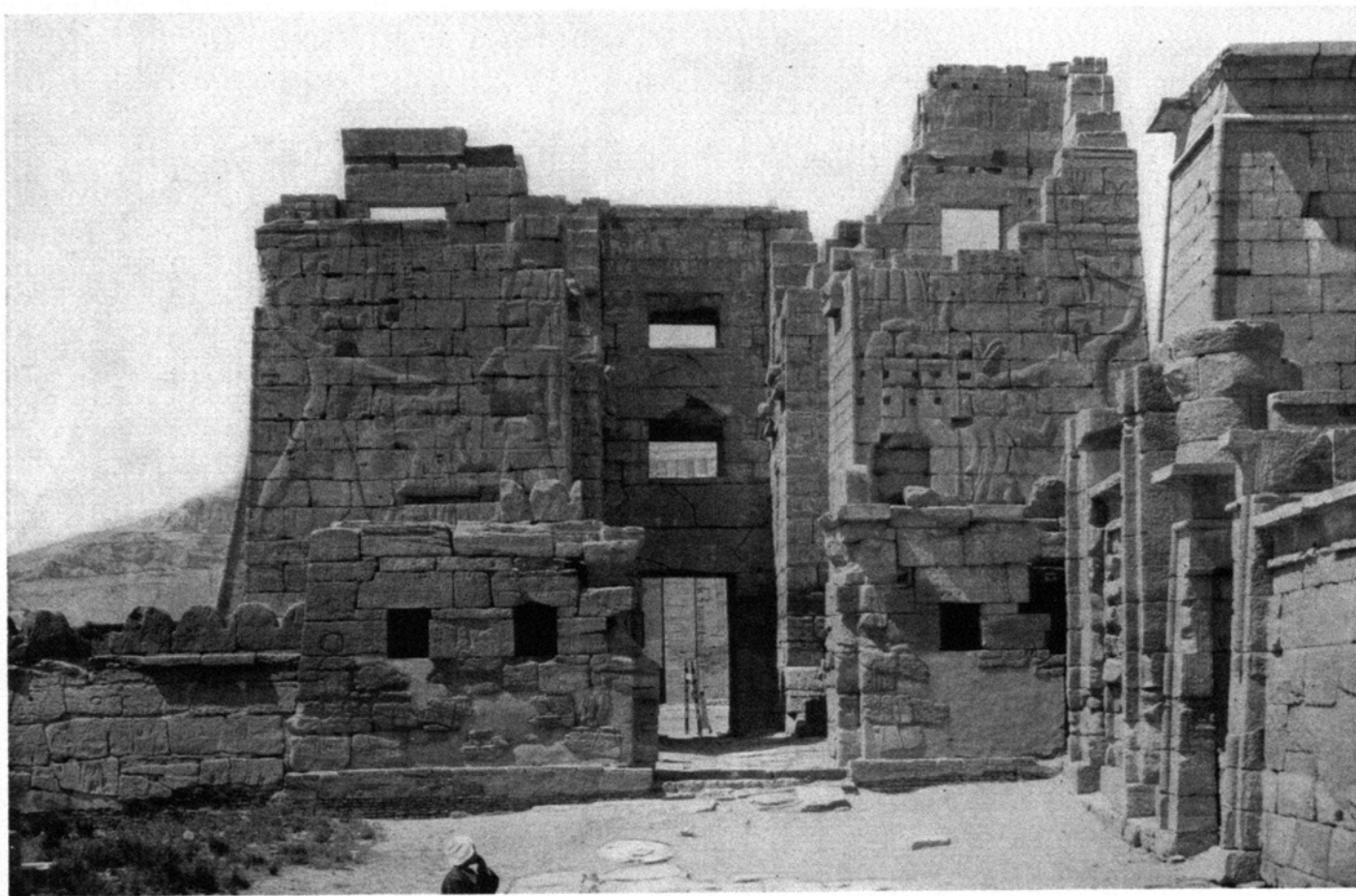


FIG. 5.—The Fortified Gate at Medinet Habu. Present state



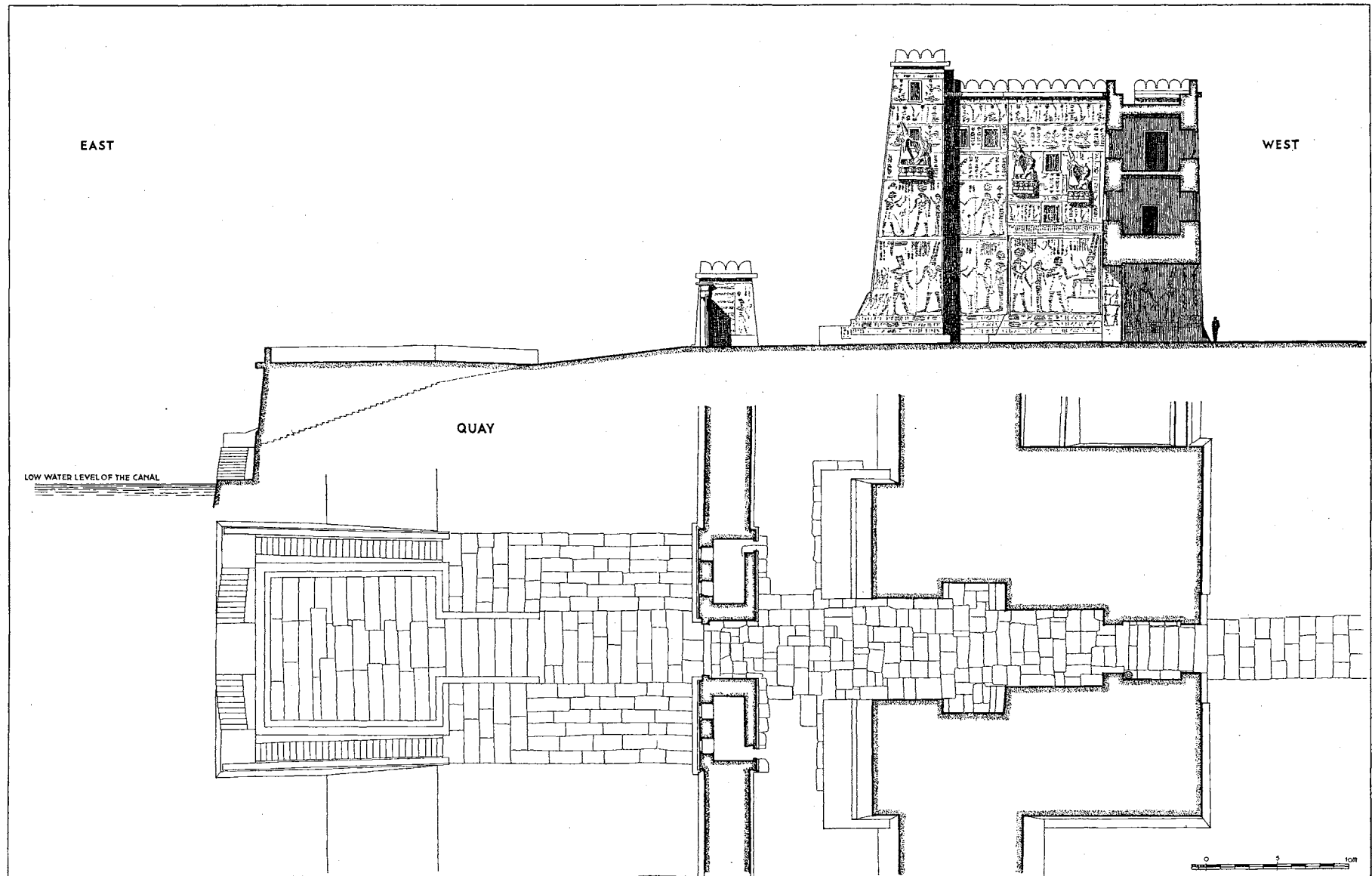


FIG. 6.—The Fortified Gate at Medinet Habu. Reconstructed longitudinal section and ground plan

form, its projecting wall surfaces decorated with statues probably showing the king smiting his enemies. Its rear part gives the effect of a second pair of flanking towers and suggests that perhaps behind the visible Great Girdle Wall lay a second, similar wall. Such double walls have, indeed, actually been found in Asiatic fortifications, for example, at Senjirli and at Babylon.

The low Outer Wall also was constructed of stone. Its value for defensive purposes may have lain in the fact that the enemy could not approach unhindered to assault the Great Girdle Wall with scaling-ladders. It can hardly be supposed that the low wall was manned by a garrison, though its crenelated top made it appear so, for its gateway is flanked by two small guardhouses possessing relatively large outside windows, and the gateway itself could hardly have withstood a vigorous attack.

But the Outer Wall was built of stone on the east side only—the side which was visible to an approaching procession—whereas on the other three sides it was constructed of ordinary mud brick. This fact alone forms a conclusive argument that it was intended to serve a decorative, rather than a practical, purpose. Or it may be that stonework had been intended throughout, but that the other three sides of the Outer Wall had been left unfinished.

The stone portions of both the Fortified Gate and the Outer Wall were completely covered with colored reliefs, as Figures 6, 8, and 9 indicate. The brick wall was merely faced with mud and finished with whitewash.

The entire lower structure of the Fortified Gate consists of solid masonry, without rooms. The second and third stories (Fig. 7), however, contain numerous rooms, of which those that were located in the stone portions of the building were roofed with wooden beams that supported the stucco floors of the rooms above, while the brick chambers of the great structure were covered with barrel-vaulted ceilings. The entrance to the rooms lay on the south side of the Fortified Gate at the height of its second story, 7.30 meters above the ground, and was reached from a ramp that apparently connected it with the street behind the Great Girdle Wall.

The inner stone walls of the chambers were decorated with charming reliefs, and it may be assumed that the mud walls bore paintings of similar character. The king is invariably depicted, seated un-

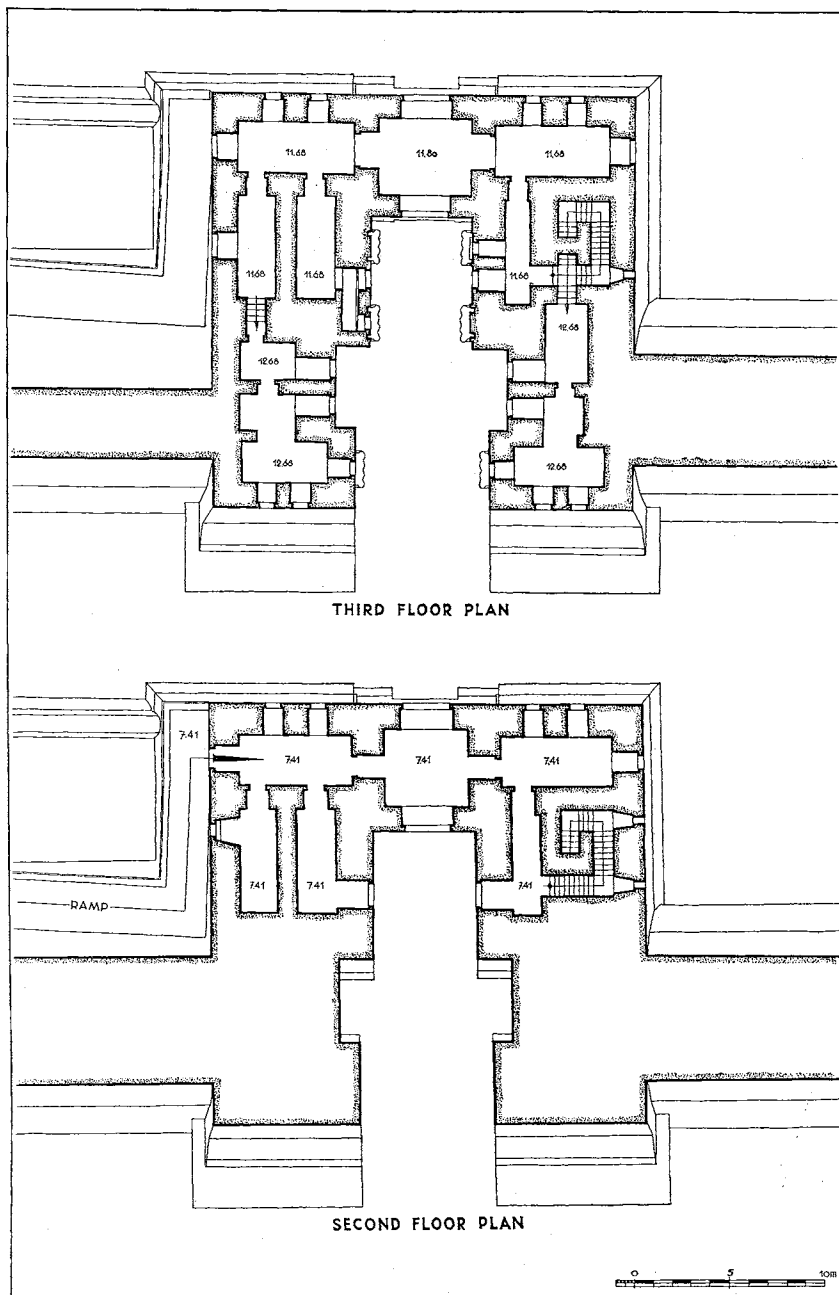


FIG. 7.—The Fortified Gate at Medinet Habu. Reconstructed plans of second and third floors.

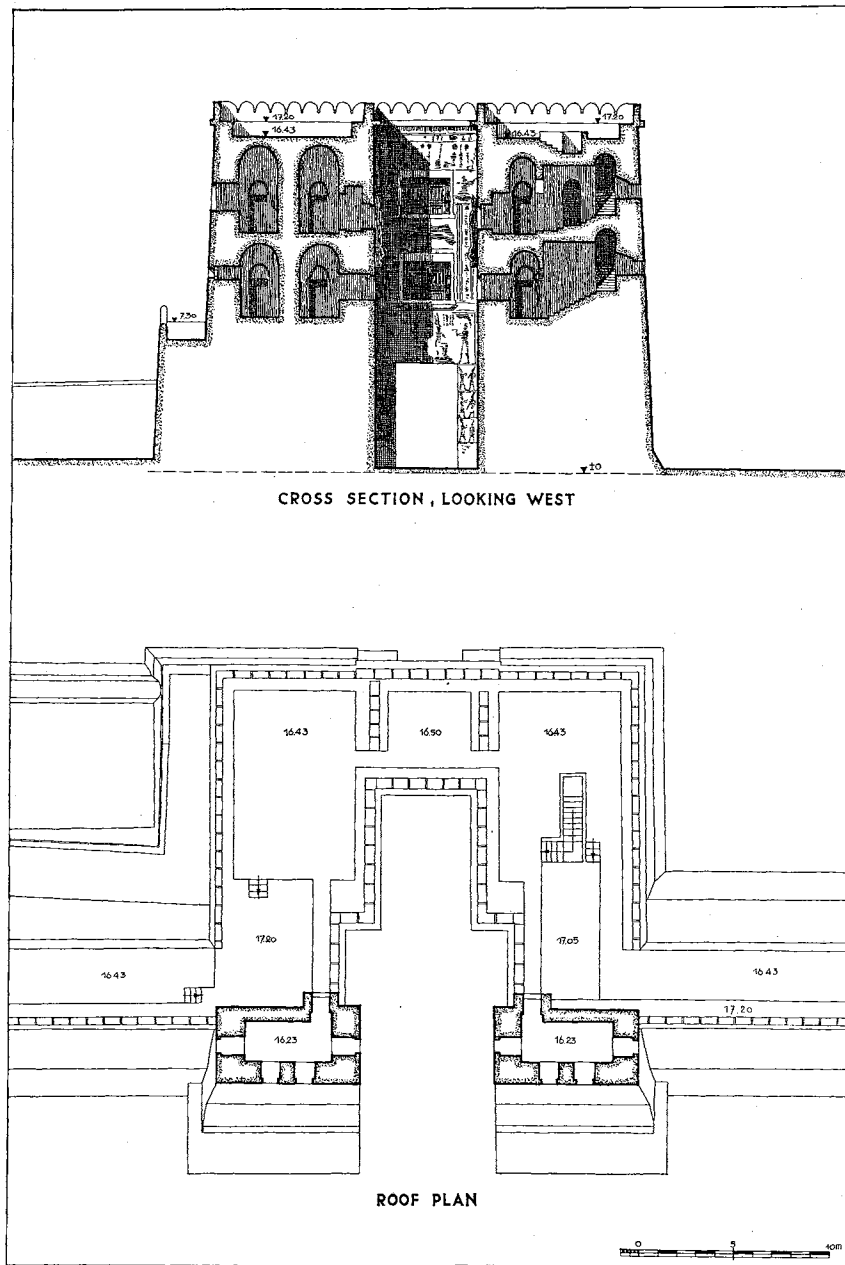


FIG. 8.—The Fortified Gate at Medinet Habu. Reconstructed cross-section and roof plan.

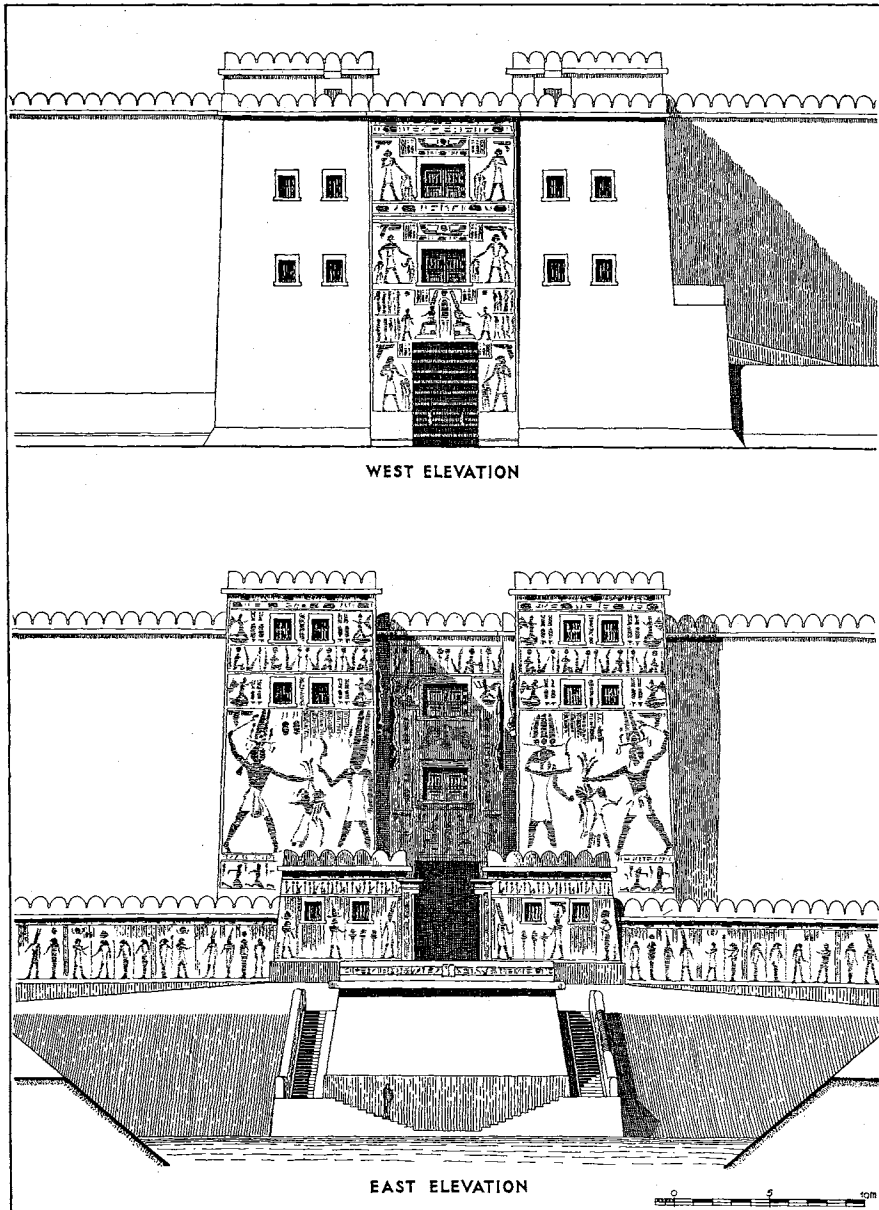


FIG. 9.—The Fortified Gate at Medinet Habu. Reconstructed elevations



clothed on a throne or folding chair and receiving flowers, fruits, and the like from the maidens of his harem, playing at draughts with them, or intimately caressing them. The girls wear merely a scarf and flowers on their heads and beads about their necks, but are otherwise nude (Figs. 10 and 11). Only on the door jambs and in the corridors do we see the king arrayed in the usual royal apparel as he approaches or leaves the apartments. According to these representations, which are repeated in every room, there is no doubt that the chambers above the gate were intended for the recreation and pleasure of the king and his harem.

To explain the uses of the individual rooms is difficult, since they bear no comparison with definite groups of rooms such as we know in dwelling-houses. The three principal apartments lie toward the west in the second story (see Fig. 7) and are accessible directly from the ramp. The middle one, a square room with flat ceiling, is connected by opposite doorways to vaulted wings from which other rooms branch off. The three main rooms of the third story and their subsidiary chambers are arranged exactly as on the floor below, but here the doorways between the central room and the wings are wider and more elegantly planned. The east half of the Fortified Gate, which in the first two stories is solid masonry, contains on the third floor two separate groups of three small rooms each, which lie on a level 1 meter higher than the west half and were probably connected with it by a few steps. The flat roof at which the staircase terminates must at times have served as a resort for the royal harem, for here also the rooms in the adjoining east towers (see Fig. 8) exhibit wall reliefs of the same character as those found in the rooms below.

As to the significance of this apparently paradoxical building there has been much discussion for several decades, and various designations have been applied to it, according to whether emphasis was placed upon its fortified character or upon the nature of its rooms. For example, it has been called the royal palace or harem, a designation which has been refuted by our excavation of the actual palace. Wilkinson in his *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians*, and later Daressy, used the term "pavilion," which is fairly accurate in respect to the inner rooms, but ignores the main significance of the building as a gateway. Years ago, therefore, I adopted the relatively general term

"High Gate" as the most appropriate name for the structure, and called the rooms above it the "royal kiosk." In agreement with the

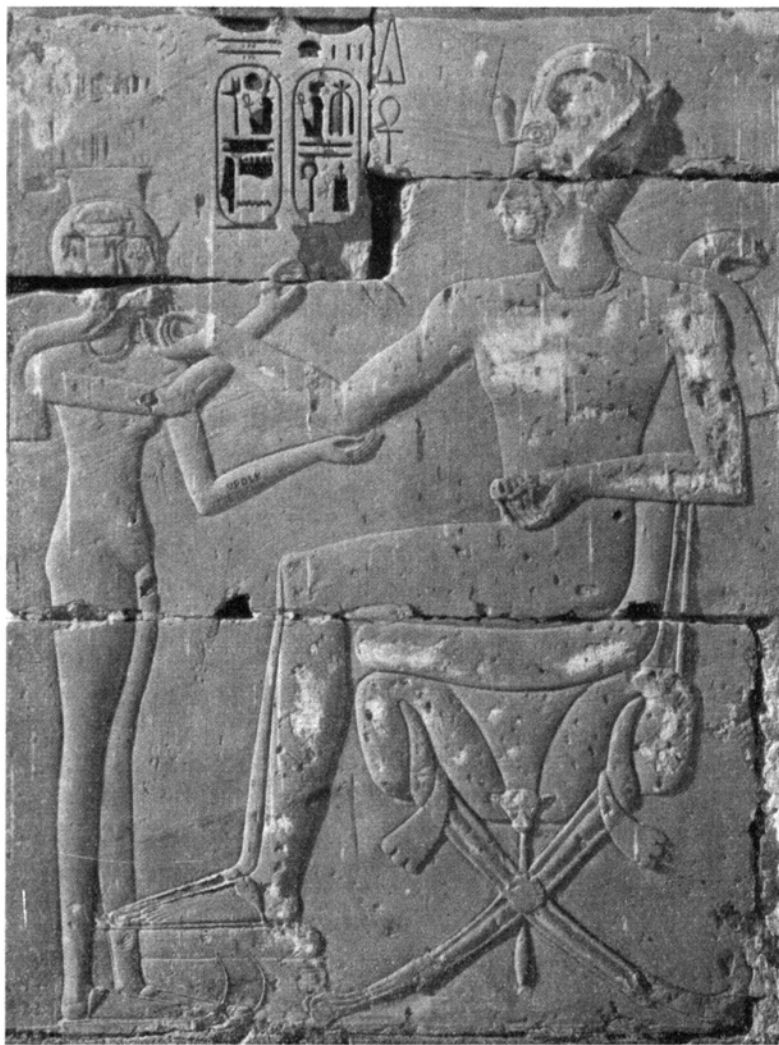


FIG. 10.—Harem scene. Relief in a chamber of the Fortified Gate

Epigraphic Survey we now designate the whole as the "Fortified Gate," though in using that term one must also always keep in mind the "royal kiosk" function of its inner rooms. Our use of the word



FIG. 11.—Girls of the harem. Relief in a chamber of the Fortified Gate

"kiosk" is intended to convey the idea that the rooms served not as the royal harem, with living- and sleeping-apartments for the singers and dancers, but only as a temporary retreat, as one might seek the attractions of a pavilion in a garden. The harem proper lay beside and behind the Second Palace of Ramses III (Fig. 12).

The foregoing explanation, which I presented in an address before the 18th International Congress of Orientalists at Leyden, was soon questioned by two very competent scholars, who assumed that the building of the Second Palace was contemporaneous with the celebration of the king's jubilee (*hb-sd*) and that the alleged "women's apartments" were occupied by the participating princes, while the throne in the "women's salon"<sup>1</sup> was that of the crown prince. I wish briefly to express my objection to this view.

We shall for the present not dwell on the remarkable fact that everywhere in the representations of the princes in the Great Temple of Ramses III their names were originally omitted and were probably added only after the death of Ramses III. The obvious conclusion is that they must have played a relatively minor rôle in the festivities. In the so-called "harem" itself not a single inscription establishes definitely the use of the rooms. Their explanation, therefore, must come exclusively out of the architectural arrangement.

The "harem" consists of two parts, the first of which contains three exactly similar apartments separated from the palace by a narrow passage. The other part is the "women's salon" with a court of its own before it, adjoining the palace and connected with its six-columned hall. It possessed a bath and toilet, but no bedroom. For that reason it could not have been a private apartment for some important individual, but was rather a room for the common use of the king and the occupants of the "women's apartments." In addition, the latter suites possessed a second, direct connection with the royal apartments through the only doorway in the entire "harem" that is decorated with the royal titles. Though there is also a direct approach to these three rear apartments from the outside, it winds through narrow passages and numerous double doors and was surely nothing more than a service entrance. This arrangement of rooms excludes, in my opinion, the possibility that adult princes with a certain amount of independence could have

<sup>1</sup> The terms here quoted are those used in *OIC* No. 5, pp. 45-46.

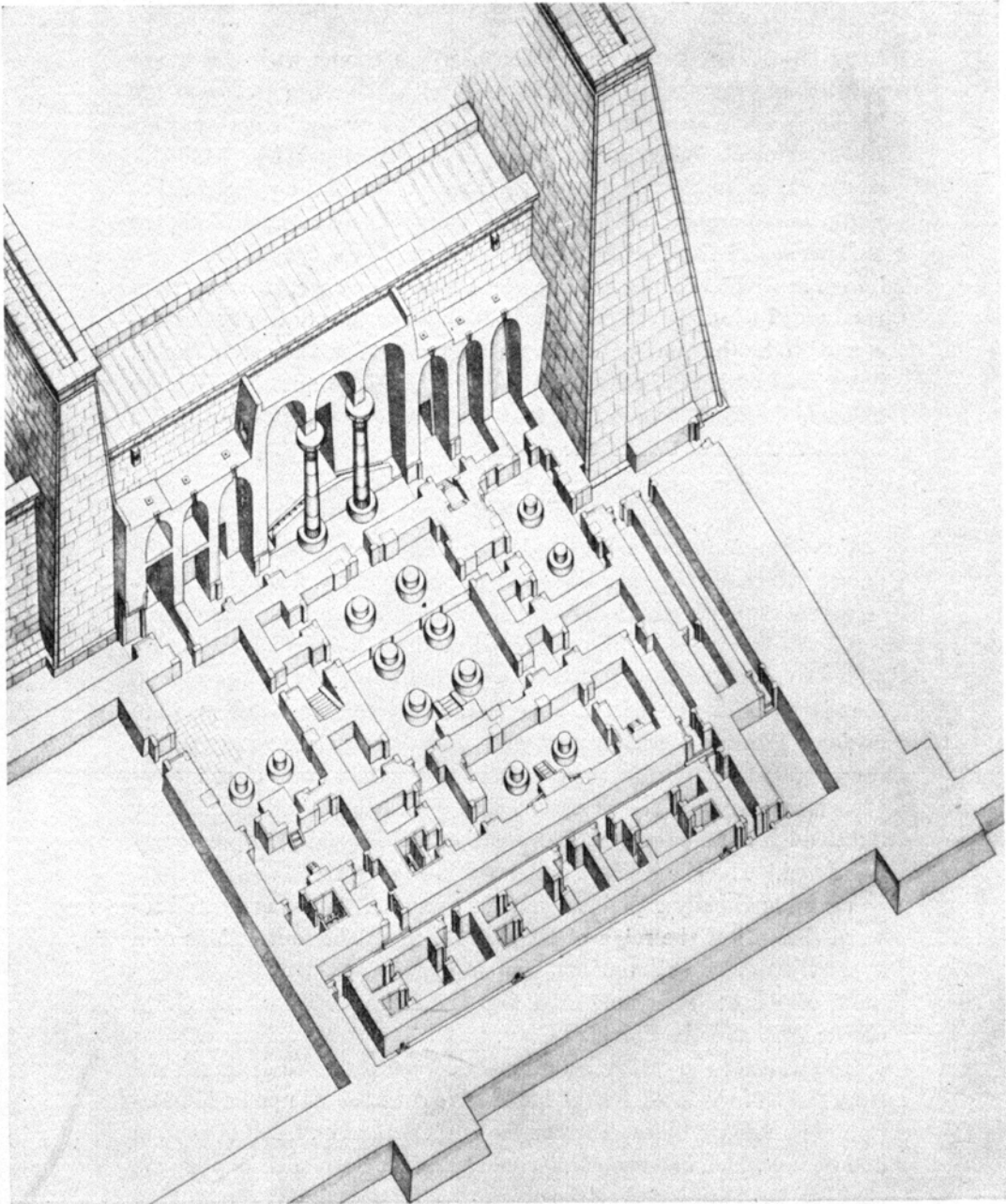


FIG. 12.—The Second Palace of Ramses III at Medinet Habu. Reconstruction

lived here. The double connection of these rooms with the king's private apartments is consistent only with their use to house the harem. Their plan agrees in general with that of the harem quarters which Winlock found in the palace of Amenhotep III at Malkata, southwest of Medinet Habu, and also with those of the palace of Ikhnaton as represented in the tombs of Tell el-Amarna. Last of all, the wall scenes in the Fortified Gate leave no doubt that there was a harem at Medinet Habu. In the vicinity of the palace, that is, within the Inner Inclosure Wall, no other building has been or can be demonstrated to be the quarters of the royal harem. That the harem should have lived outside of the wall is surely out of the question. We are obliged, therefore, to conclude that the harem was housed not in the Fortified Gate but behind the palace.

#### THE PALACE

Consideration of the Fortified Gate has brought us back to the palace, which we have already discussed in *OIC* Nos. 5 and 7. The reconstruction work mentioned in *OIC* No. 7 has now been completed. As shown in Figure 13, the destroyed mud brick walls have been restored to a uniform height upon the original, relatively well preserved foundations. The re-erected door jambs and column bases also are ancient. We can therefore now walk about the palace rooms as did the king and his court in the past, and thus gain a fairly clear idea of their arrangement. The reconstruction work has yielded certain new data which have necessitated revision of the ground plan previously published.<sup>1</sup> The changes are embodied in Figure 12.

We have already explained that the Second Palace was erected toward the end of the reign of Ramses III upon the foundations of a superseded older palace of his contemporaneously with the enlargement of the entire temple area and the construction of the Great Girdle Wall and the Fortified Gate.

The walls of the earlier building period can easily be distinguished from those of the later, for the latter were constructed upon a foundation of building rubbish, whereas the former stand on a bed of sand in and beside which had been scattered small fayence models of offerings that had been presented on the occasion of the foundation ceremonies.

<sup>1</sup> *OIC* No. 5, Fig. 30.



FIG. 13.—The Second Palace of Ramses III at Medinet Habu as reconstructed



These models represent slaughtered cattle, ibexes, and various cuts of meat, and include also small rectangular tiles bearing the name of Ramses III. Under the walls of the latest period, on the other hand, were found rings and beads of blue fayence or occasionally of sheet gold, together with scarabs inscribed with the name of Ramses III (Fig. 14).

Our survey of the walls, taken in connection with the above mentioned foundation deposits, makes clear both the original plan and the



FIG. 14.—Foundation deposits of Ramses III, chiefly of fayence

later changes which were wrought in the area adjoining the palace on the west. At the time of the First Palace this space was occupied by magazines, among which lay two courts with wells. When the Second Palace was erected, a court or garden was laid out which was accessible from the court of the harem. Still recognizable in it are a pool and various small walls which probably belonged to garden terraces, colonnades, and other subsidiary structures. These last could not be recovered in detail, for alterations had been too extensive, and since the 25th–26th dynasties the entire district had been covered with dwellings.







FIG. 15.—Front of the palace of Ramses III; in the center, the Window of Royal Appearances

THE WINDOW AND BALCONY OF ROYAL APPEARANCES<sup>1</sup>

During this season a special study was made of the "Window of Royal Appearances," which formed an imposing connection between the palace and the first court of the Great Temple. By "Window of Royal Appearances" is to be understood the magnificent palace window at which the king "appeared," that is, showed himself publicly while conducting an inspection or reviewing a parade. Such a window is not found in private dwellings, but belongs, so far as we know, exclusively to palace architecture, and may even be considered its distinguishing feature.

In Egyptian representations the Window of Royal Appearances should not be confused with the king's audience throne. The king *sits* on the latter, only slightly elevated above the floor of the room, with only a few steps separating him from visitors. In the Window, however, an opening which is approached from the palace by a flight of steps, the king *stands* before the public to see and be seen from this elevated point.<sup>2</sup> There is no connection between him and the populace at his feet, and he tosses his gifts down to his favorites from his lofty station.

It is more than twenty years since I first wrote about the Window of Royal Appearances at Medinet Habu.<sup>3</sup> Now that our excavations have recovered essential parts which had been broken away and missing since the time of Ramses III and a detailed study of the structural remains has been made, I am able to offer an exact reconstruction of the original condition of the Window of Royal Appearances, and also to present a well founded theory regarding its later history.

To explain the two different stages of which I wish to speak, I must again mention the fact that in Medinet Habu there had been two different palaces of Ramses III, one of which was built upon the ruins of the other. The first of these (see Fig. 37), contemporaneous with the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. my article, "Erscheinungsfenster und Erscheinungsbalkon im königlichen Palast," in *Zeitschrift für äg. Sprache* LXVII (1931) 43-51.

<sup>2</sup> The inscriptions in the Window of Appearances are as follows: "His [Majesty] appears like Atum in the [House of Millions of] Years in order to view the monuments which his hands have made for his father Amon-Re. . . ." "The king himself, he says to the nobles, the prophets, and the officers of the infantry and the chariotry: 'Behold my good works which are before you. . . .'"

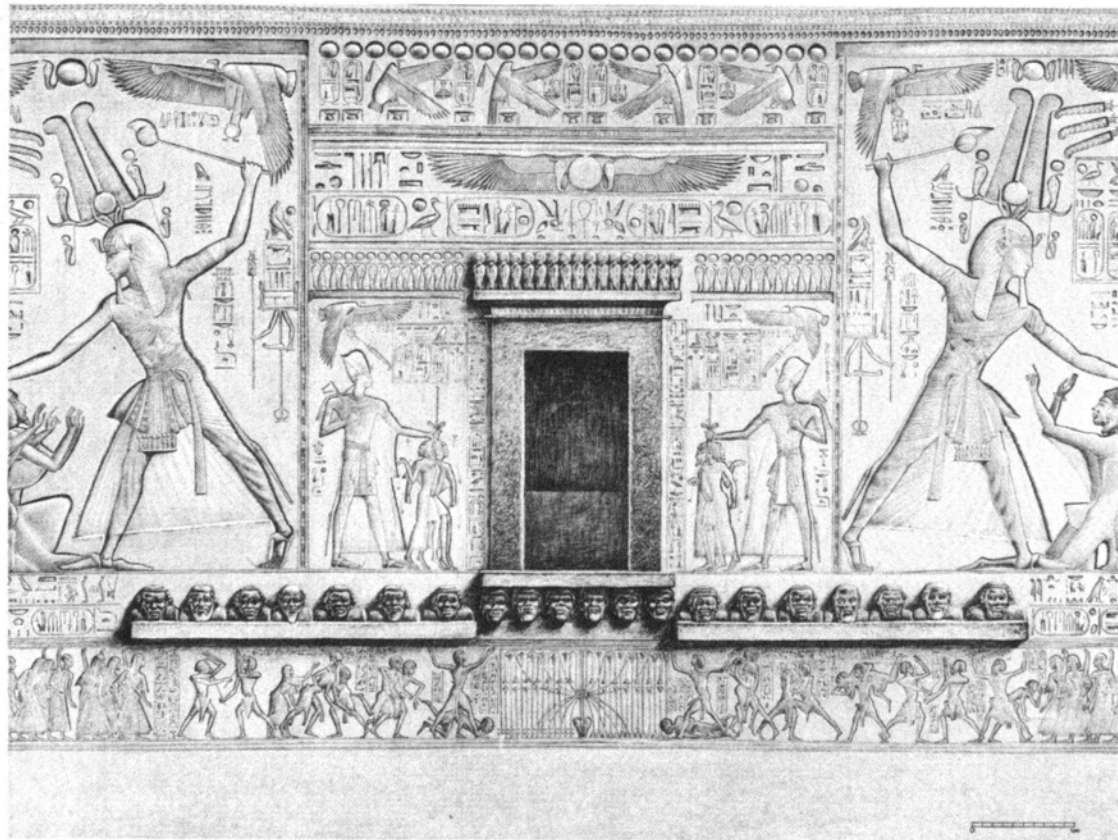
<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Das Hohe Tor*, pp. 14 and 48 ff.

temple, consisted chiefly of official reception rooms. The Window of Royal Appearances lay in its axis, opposite the throne in the audience hall, at the top of a long stairway. From the exterior, that is, from the first court of the Great Temple, the Window formed the central point of the palace façade which extended behind the mighty colonnade. To the two entrances into the palace, one on either side of the great Window, were allotted relatively insignificant positions in the recessed ends of the façade (Fig. 15).

After only a few years Ramses III replaced the First Palace with another, which was more strictly a royal dwelling, though a modest one, containing a full complement of living-rooms and a harem. The palace façade with the Window of Royal Appearances of the First Palace remained, but the Window itself was widened and extended forward in the form of a balcony. We must accordingly differentiate between the Window of Royal Appearances in the First Palace and the Balcony of Royal Appearances in the Second. It is unnecessary to say much about the former, as Plate III is largely self-explanatory. The Window was of modest dimensions, with an opening of only 1.05 meters (2 Egyptian cubits). It could be closed by means of double shutterlike doors. The outer face of the stone wall was smoothed, then coated with cloth, over which stucco was spread. It is my belief that the latter was delicately modeled in relief and then covered with gold. At the top the wall was crowned with a *cavetto* cornice and a frieze of cobras; the bracket below rested on a row of sculptured heads representing foreign captives from the North and South. These extended for several meters along the wall at each side of the Window and served as a base for representations of the king, so that he appeared to tread upon his bound enemies. Under the brackets supporting these extensions are depicted wrestling bouts and singlestick combats such as doubtless took place in the court for the entertainment of the king.<sup>1</sup> The highly decorative quality of the composition can be seen in our picture.

The later reconstruction and enlargement of the Window of Royal Appearances arose obviously from the desire to gain more room for the ruler and his retinue and to obtain a better view between the columns.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. John A. Wilson, "Ceremonial Games of the New Kingdom," *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* XVII (1931) 211-20.



*Printed in Germany*

THE WINDOW OF ROYAL APPEARANCES IN THE FIRST PALACE OF MEDINET HABU  
RECONSTRUCTION



This was achieved by breaking out the stone window frame, chiseling off the *cavetto* cornice and the frieze of serpents, and removing the bracket with the prisoners' heads. Then a solid stone platform was constructed which extended out into the court as far as the bases of the mighty columns, and upon it was erected a light balcony of wood. Unfortunately, both of these additions have disappeared; but they have left on the wall clear traces from which each constructional detail can be recognized. These traces are summarized in Figure 16. The full width of the stone platform (5.97 meters) is exactly indicated by the extent to which the heads of the foreign prisoners have been chiseled off, while its depth (1.90 meters) can be observed where its outer edge was let into the bases of the columns. The superstructure consisted of a wooden canopy, the floor joists, architraves, and cornice beams of which were let into the stone wall. To avoid the possibility of their working loose and slipping out, they were fastened in the holes with ropes and then probably covered with plaster.

At the front of the canopy were four wooden columns, of which the two central ones were reinforced with bars which extended to the wall behind. Back of the columns stood wooden screens about 2.50 meters in height, the ends of which were let into the stone wall and similarly bound fast with cords. On the wall there are likewise rows of small wooden plugs about .01 in diameter which were meant to receive small copper nails. It would seem from these that the wooden screens were adorned on their outer surfaces with sheet metal.

In the center the screens must have been lower, in order that the king might be able to see out from the Balcony as he had from the Window. At the same time the window must have been provided with shutters so that the palace could be closed off at will. The canopy evidently possessed no real roof; probably hangings or embroidered awnings were spread over it and fixed to the wall by metal fastenings, perhaps rings.

Before the balcony there was a small ramp or stairway, traces of which may still be seen on the column bases. Here the favorites stood to receive the decorations which the king tossed down to them. Numerous scenes of this nature are known from the tombs of Tell el-Amarna (e.g., Fig. 17); we ourselves found a similar one built into the stairway which led to the Balcony of Royal Appearances (Fig. 18).



FIG. 16.—The Window of Royal Appearances. Diagram showing traces of the later balcony. Scale, 1:60



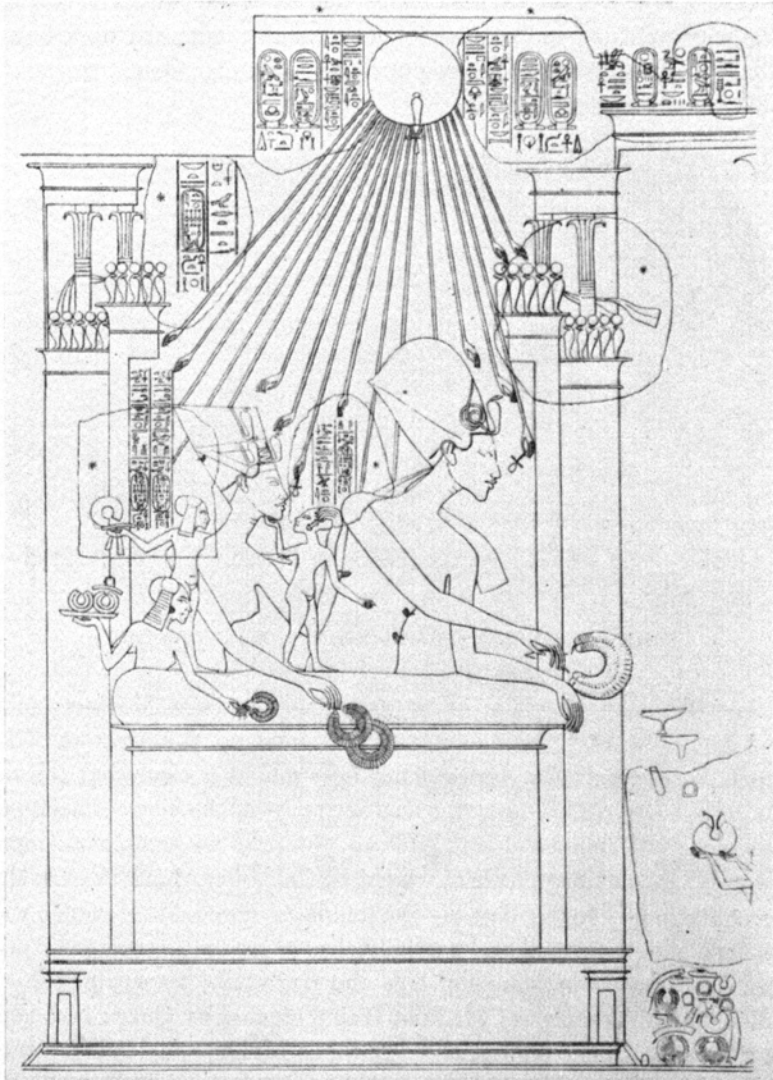


FIG. 17.—The king in his Balcony of Royal Appearances. Wall scene at Tell el-Amarna (Davies, *The Rock Tombs of El-Amarna* VI, Pl. XXIX).

Through the observation of these few physical remains it is thus possible to recover the details of construction of the vanished Balcony. We may venture to reconstruct its probable outward appearance (Plate IV) according to representations of similar structures in the wall reliefs of private tombs.

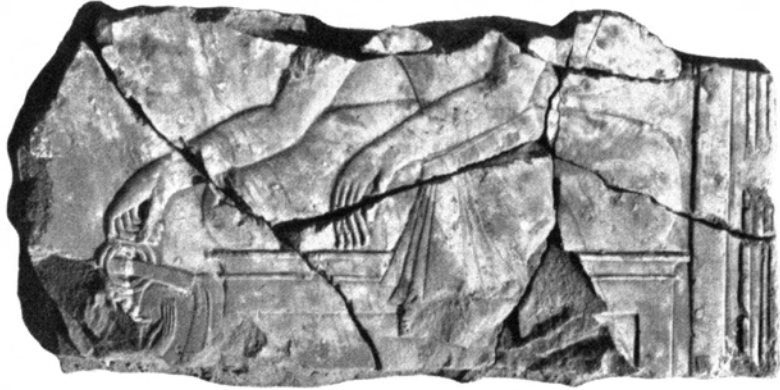
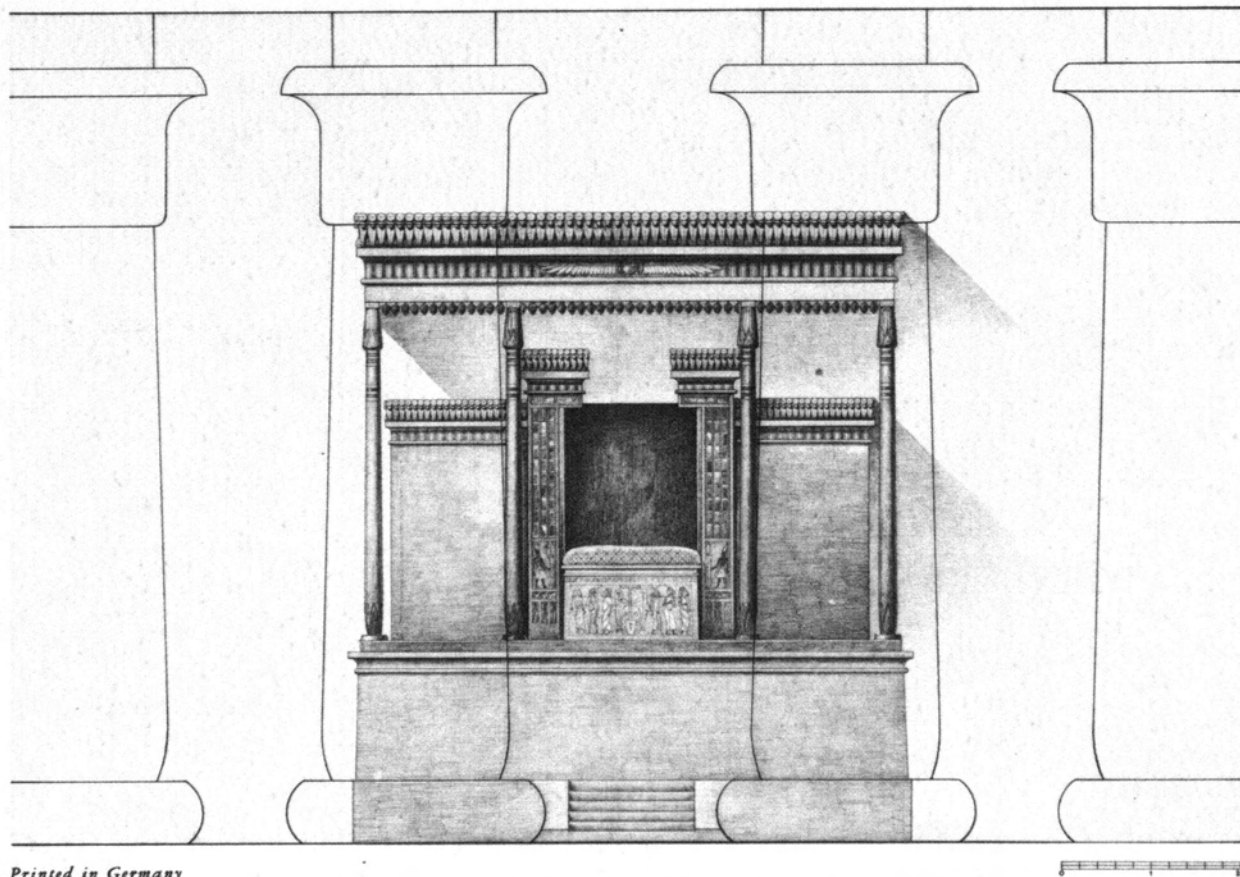


FIG. 18.—The king, leaning on a balustrade, gives a decoration to one of his followers. Relief found at Medinet Habu.

#### THE VICISSITUDES OF MEDINET HABU BEFORE AND AFTER THE TIME OF RAMSES III

The temple of Eye, discovered this season north of Medinet Habu and discussed on pages 47-53, takes us back to the great imperial epoch of the pharaohs. Its presence here makes it clear that toward the end of the 18th dynasty the southern part of the Theban necropolis had already become closely built up. South of the temple of Amenhotep III, to the magnitude of which the Colossi of Memnon offer eloquent testimony to this day, lay the temple of Thutmose II, which was not long ago discovered and partially cleared by the French Institute. Next to it stood our temple of Eye and Harmhab; then came the so-called "Small Temple" of Medinet Habu, erected by Queen Hatshepsut.<sup>1</sup> Finally, in the district now known as Malkata lay the residence city of Amenhotep III, in front of which was situated the broad artificial lake which we know as Birket Habu. Among the temples were located other structures, mostly village settlements, of which remains have come to light during the excavation of Medinet Habu.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *OIC* No. 10, pp. 67-69.



THE BALCONY OF ROYAL APPEARANCES IN THE SECOND PALACE OF MEDINET HABU  
SUGGESTED RECONSTRUCTION



It is precisely where Ramses III carried on his building program that we find the greatest difficulty in tracing the remains of older levels. For, when the workmen of this last great builder began to prepare the site for their operations, they destroyed or filled in without the slightest compunction everything that stood in their way. The Small Temple alone, honored as an ancient sanctuary, was spared. The time of Ramses III was the golden age of Medinet Habu. The completeness, unrivaled in all Egypt, in which the buildings of this district survive grips our interest. Our excavation has revealed, however, that at the death of Ramses III his temple complex was indeed rather complete externally, but not within in the area between the Inner Inclosure Wall and the Great Girdle Wall—the area which represented the later program of expansion. Thus the rows of houses of the officials at the west end were never fully developed, and the administrative courts in the east appear not to have received their intended interior appointments. Even in the Second Palace the harem quarters were only superficially complete and remained without decoration.

Whether or to what extent the weak later Ramessids used the temple of Medinet Habu it is impossible to determine with certainty. Their building activities in the temple were in any case of an extremely minor character. In one of the courts are the remains of a grove or orchard, behind which stood an extensive building which may date from this period. But the royal splendor of the site had already vanished.

In the following 21st dynasty (1090–945 B.C.), when Libyan rulers from the Delta seized the double crown of Egypt, that portion of the temple area which lay between the Inner Inclosure Wall and the Great Girdle Wall had already degenerated into a private residence quarter consisting of numerous fairly extensive estates. These were surrounded by inclosure walls, mostly only one stretcher thick, reinforced at frequent intervals with buttresses. The bricks employed in their construction were taken haphazardly from various older buildings and therefore vary in length from 36 to 44 centimeters.

In the southwest there was a large manorial house which belonged to the scribe of the necropolis, Butehamon, son of Thutmose. This man, who lived at the beginning of the 21st dynasty, is well known to us, as it was he who piously caused to be re-wrapped and reburied



FIG. 19.—House of Butehamon, scribe of the Theban necropolis at the beginning of the 21st dynasty

some royal mummies, including that of Ramses III, which had been disturbed by tomb-robbers. His coffin has been in the Turin Museum for many years.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, only the two main rooms of Butehamon's house (Fig. 19) have escaped the ravages of the *sebbakhin*. The first was a square living-room with four palm-leaf columns; its architraves rested on stone pilasters. At the rear wall was an elevated platform for Butehamon's seat, so that the room resembled in plan the four-columned throne hall in the First Palace (cf. Fig. 37). Butehamon's walls, however, which were only one header plus one stretcher in thickness, were too weak to have supported a vaulted ceiling of brick like that in the palace. The sandstone columns were plastered with stucco and decorated with inscriptions and scenes relating to the cult in the necropolis, of which the master of the house was an administrative official. Among others, there are representations of Amenhotep I and his mother Ahmose-Nefretiri in their rôle of protecting deities of the necropolis. When found, the columns were on the verge of collapse as a result of digging by the *sebbakhin*, but we have re-erected and strengthened them and replaced the fallen palm-leaf capitals which we discovered in the débris. Of the anteroom, which was connected with the living-room by a wide door, there remain only two unfinished columns. The discovery of the house of Butehamon definitely dated this level of our excavation to the beginning of the 21st dynasty.

The next two levels belong to the 22d-24th dynasties (945-712 B.C.), as is proved by the fact that they lie under the chapels of the 25th-26th dynasties. They are differentiated from the preceding level by the crowded and confused manner in which the houses are arranged. Winding blind alleys lead to the individual quarters (Fig. 20; cf. Fig. 24), exactly as we find them in the *fellahin* villages of today.

It is apparent that by this time the entire outer temple area was occupied by peasants and craftsmen of the surrounding district who had fled from their enemies to the protection of the towering walls of Medinet Habu. Altogether there is revealed a depressing picture of the sad decline of the old civilization. Only a few of the houses now had such imposing features as living-rooms with two columns. Build-

<sup>1</sup> Cat. No. 2236. Concerning Butehamon see Maspero, "Les momies royales de Déir el-Bahari," *Mémoires . . . de la Mission archéol. française au Caire* I (1884-) 564; Breasted, *Ancient Records* IV § 640.



FIG. 20.—Excavation within the southeast corner of the Great Girdle Wall of Ramses III. The lower level on the right belongs to the 21st dynasty; the higher level shows small houses of *fellahin* of the 22d dynasty. In the background, center, is a tower of the Roman period.



ing stone, especially that which was employed for door jambs, was regularly taken from older structures, and similarly old bricks of greatly varying sizes were re-used. Interesting for the history of civilization are the finds in these houses, which plainly reveal the meager standard of living of their inhabitants.

The Great Temple of Ramses III and the area within the Inner Inclosure Wall appear to have been relatively undisturbed at this time. Whether, however, divine worship was still carried on in the Great Temple, or even whether it still supported a priesthood, is doubtful. At the beginning of the 21st dynasty a high priest of Amon, Paynoz-em, immortalized his name on the door jambs of the palace; but we do not know who dwelt there in that and later times. It may have been some high official of the Theban necropolis, and it is even probable that the palace became the seat of administration. At any rate it appears that Medinet Habu was the source of legal documents which have provided accounts of a palace revolution and of robberies of royal tombs.<sup>1</sup> The vaulted temple magazines of the district appear also to have been in use at this period.

Although the Great Temple of Ramses III had now sunk into a state of neglect, the small Amon temple of the 18th dynasty enjoyed decided veneration as a local sanctuary. Its popularity is evidenced not only by inscriptions of the high priest Paynoz-em of the 21st dynasty, but also by the fact that "King" Harsiese, a petty independent prince contemporary with Osorkon II of the 22d dynasty, erected for himself beside it a tomb, probably with a mortuary chapel (now vanished) above it. Of the chapel a single building stone bearing the name of Harsiese was found re-used in a Ptolemaic gateway. The tomb itself was still almost intact when discovered, though the burial had been disturbed and almost destroyed. As the water level has risen 2.50 meters since antiquity, the stairway leading downward into the tomb ended at a level that is now under water for half the year. At the foot was disclosed an anteroom which, along with the slanting gallery leading to it, had been closed with great building stones in order to prevent the entrance of tomb-robbers (Fig. 21). But the latter had

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Peet, *The Great Tomb Robberies of the Twentieth Egyptian Dynasty* (Oxford, 1930); Breasted, *op. cit.* §§ 416-56 and 499-556; Struve in *Aegyptus* VII (1926) 3-17.

forced an entrance by means of a vertical shaft and had cut an opening through the stone ceiling into the tomb chamber, where we found the

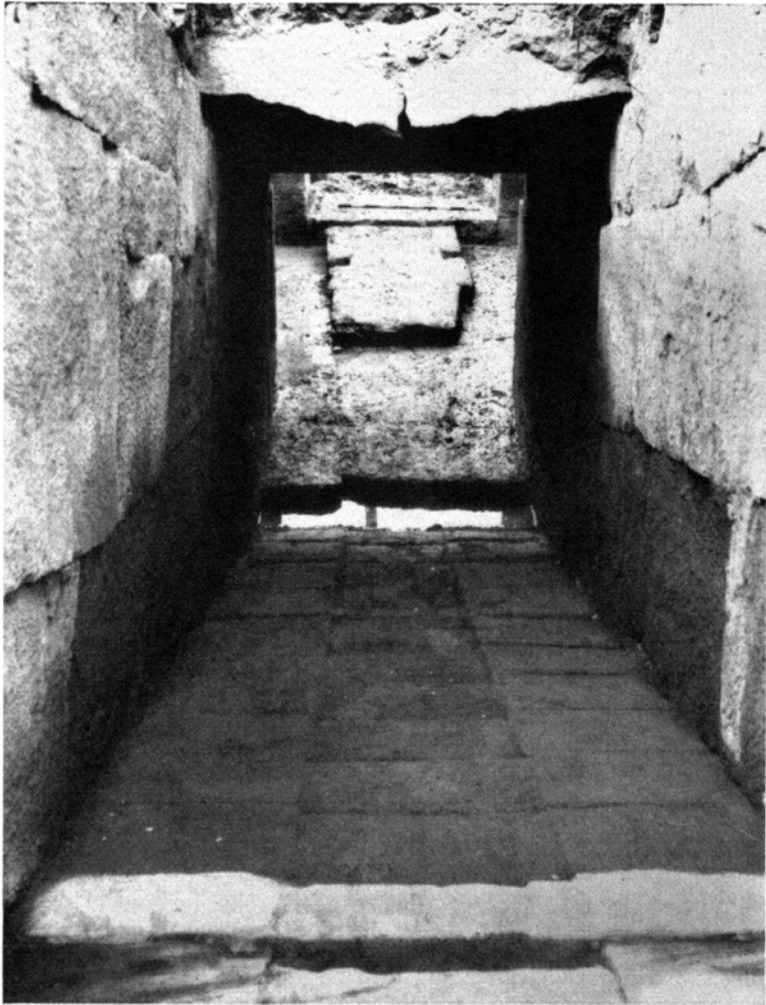


FIG. 21.—Tomb of "King" Harsiese. Anteroom and staircase

granite sarcophagus (Fig. 22). Its heavy lid had been shoved aside sufficiently to enable the thieves to extract the mummy. Only the prince's skull and a few fragments of other bones remained. However,

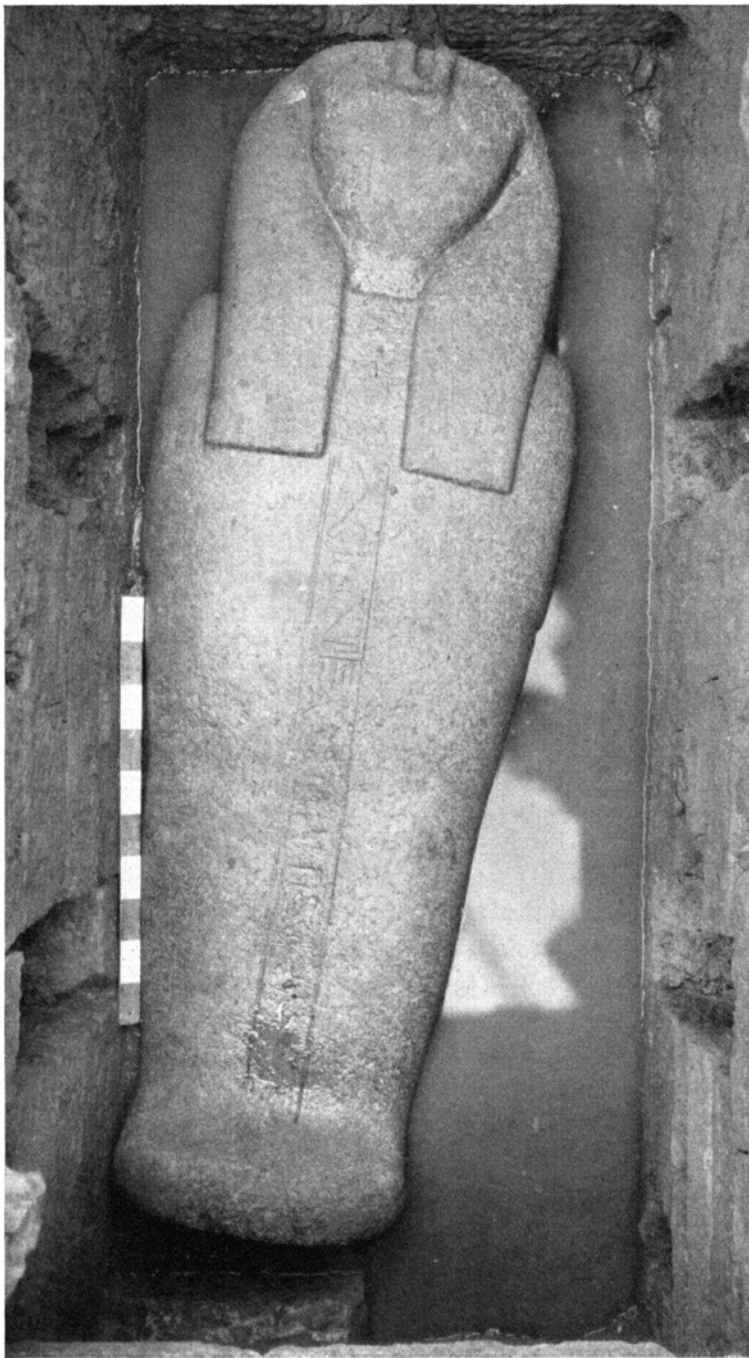


FIG. 22.—Tomb of "King" Harsiese. The sarcophagus *in situ* in the inundated tomb chamber. On the lid is the head of a falcon whose lost beak had been fastened on with a peg.

of the funerary equipment we obtained four splendid alabaster canopic jars, unfortunately without lids.

The red granite sarcophagus was very neatly carved, both outside and in, with religious texts in which the name of the original owner had everywhere been chiseled out, but nowhere replaced by a new one (Fig. 23). By careful study the effaced name has been identified as that of Queen Hentmire,<sup>1</sup> the sister and wife of Ramses II. Her own tomb, which lay perhaps in the Valley of the Queens' Tombs, had already been pillaged by this time, so that Harsiese could obtain the sarcophagus for his own burial. The original lid, however, must have been smashed by the previous robbers, for Harsiese had supplied him-

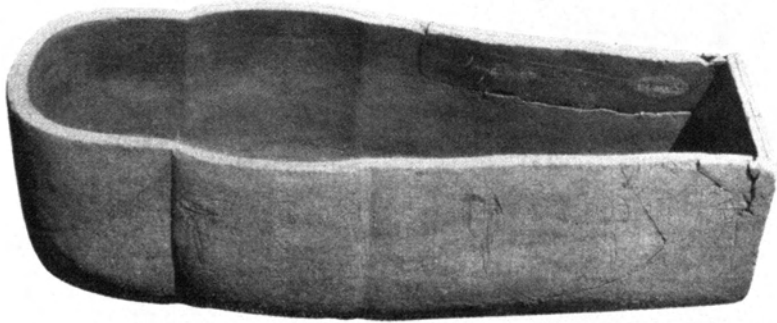


FIG. 23.—Tomb of "King" Harsiese. The sarcophagus after removal from tomb

self with a massive new one of the same material, inscribed with his own name and royal titulary. It is an interesting fact that this mummiform lid bears not a human head but that of a falcon, evidently in harmony with the name of its owner Harsiese, "Horus the son of Isis"; for Horus is usually represented with falcon head.

Built into the ceiling and walls of this tomb, evidently for the purpose of obstructing the entrance, were numerous blocks of stone—columns, door jambs, and the like—which date from the First Palace of Ramses III.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Gauthier, *Le livre des rois d'Égypte* III (Cairo, 1914) 33 and 79. Papyrus Salt relates of a workman under Seti II (i.e., shortly before the reign of Ramses III): "He went to the burial place of Queen Hentmire and stole a large stone . . . ." See W. Spiegelberg, *Arbeiter und Arbeiterbewegung im Pharaonenreich unter den Ramessiden* (Strassburg, 1895) p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> *OIC* No. 7, p. 14.

Between the levels belonging to the 22d-24th dynasties and the next, which can be ascribed to the 25th-26th dynasties, a great catastrophe swept over all of Medinet Habu, including in part even the two stone temples. The full extent of the disaster can best be understood by a study of the excavation plans of this stratum.

The Inner Inclosure Wall, most of the buildings within it (with the possible exception of the palace and certain portions of the vaulted magazines), and the Great Girdle Wall with the brick additions to the Fortified Gate were largely destroyed; and the *fellahin* dwellings of the 22d-24th dynasties did not escape the same fate. For the dating of this catastrophe we have three quite certain facts: (1) The Ethiopian Shabaka (712-700 B.C.) built a new pylon for the Small Temple on the ruins of the Great Girdle Wall. (2) Above the ruins of the *fellahin* village his sister, the princess Amenirdis, placed her mortuary chapel. (3) Beside and among the newly erected buildings of the inner temple area objects were found bearing the names of Amenirdis and of her adopted daughter Shepnupet II, daughter of King Piankhi. These facts would seem to date the disaster immediately before the beginning of the 25th dynasty, in the confusion which attended the ephemeral 23d-24th dynasties. It was just at this time (about 730 B.C.), as is well known, that the Ethiopian Piankhi swept with his victorious forces into the Delta. It may be that there were several calamities, following one upon another, perhaps a second one in 667, when Ashurbanipal's army came to Upper Egypt, a third in 661, when Thebes "was frightfully laid waste."<sup>1</sup>

The building activity under the Ethiopian kings of the 25th dynasty and their Saitic successors (26th dynasty) centered about the Small Temple, whose peripteros was restored. Shabaka and his successor Taharka (the Tirhakah of the Bible) enlarged the temple by the erection of a long narrow hall and a pylon.<sup>2</sup> Taharka describes on a stela in the Cairo Museum<sup>3</sup> how he renewed the girdle wall of the temple and constructed a gateway to the sacred area adjoining on the north. The gateway has survived to the present day.

As, several decades before, "King" Harsiese had been buried beside the temple, so again in the 25th dynasty the district became a favorite

<sup>1</sup> Breasted, *Ancient Records* IV § 902.

<sup>2</sup> *OIC* No. 10, p. 64.

<sup>3</sup> *Annales du Service* IV 178 ff.

burial ground for the "god's wives," the "singers of Amon," and others. Among them were Amenirdis; her adopted daughter Shepnupet II, whose father was Piankhi; and in turn Shepnupet's adopted daughter Nitocris, the daughter of Psamtik; as well as Nitocris' real mother, Psamtik's wife Mehetnusekhet. With these notables, beside the new Ethiopic pylon, in the foundations of the ruined Fortified Gate, and even within the silent and deserted courts and passages of



FIG. 24.—Houses of the *fellahin* village of the 22d dynasty

the great Ramses temple, slept a multitude of less well known personages.

That the *fellahin* village (Fig. 24) remained a neglected ruin is shown by the fact that the walls of many houses still stood to a height of over 2 meters when we began our excavation.

The only new buildings to be constructed in the temple area were erected on a strip of land along the south and west walls of the Great Temple. Of these later houses some extend as far as the ruined Inner Inclosure Wall, and some even beyond it. They are, as a rule, large and stately (e.g., Fig. 25); and it seems clear that they were erected for wealthy families and high officials. Walls of .80–1.00 in thick-



FIG. 25.—Large house of the 25th dynasty

ness, built of new, small bricks (.28×.14×.08), herald a new era of prosperity.

The new splendor proved to be only transitory. With the passing of Saite sovereignty and the advent of Persian rule, Medinet Habu declined until it remained little more than a deserted ruin. Our excavation has shown practically no trace of settlement in the following centuries, except in the immediate vicinity of the Small Temple, around which the sole activity of the time centered. Achoris (392-380 B.C.) appears to have restored the peripteros; in any case a doorframe between the outer pillars dates from his reign. The columned portico in front of the Ethiopic pylon belongs to about this same time, but shortly thereafter was usurped by Nectanebo I (378-361 B.C.).<sup>1</sup> The latter enlarged the temple district by pushing outward the southern girdle wall. Finally Nectanebo II dug a large new well northwest of the Small Temple.

Investigation of the following levels became increasingly difficult and the results correspondingly incomplete, as *sebbakhin* had left very few remains. This unfortunate circumstance may explain the total lack of houses which can with certainty be dated to the Ptolemaic period. However, the additional fact that we found almost no specimens of such common objects as pottery belonging to this time may be a proof that Medinet Habu was then uninhabited. The Hellenistic settlement must have been located somewhere in the vicinity, but apparently outside of the Great Girdle Wall.

Again it is only the Small Temple which bears witness to the building activity of the Ptolemies. In the first place, Taharka's girdle wall was reconstructed. Furthermore, several interior rooms were restored; and the long, narrow hall of the Ethiopians was replaced by a wider one containing two rows of columns, while two wings were added. Last of all, there was erected a mighty pylon with a portico before it. The sacred lake in its present form may also date from this period. The shiftlessness of the time is clearly shown by the fact that the blocks of stone required for building were procured from any convenient source, above all from the ruins of the neighboring Ramesseum. Even a large granite doorway, taken from the mortuary temple of a

<sup>1</sup> This rectifies an error in *OIC* No. 10, p. 64 and Fig. 39.



certain Pediamenopet (26th dynasty), was re-erected here without any alteration of its inscriptions to suit its new location.

Little can be said concerning other tombs of this period. It may, however, be of interest to note that in two cases a pet monkey had been interred with the deceased (e.g., Fig. 26). The Great Temple as an ancient place of worship may still have received certain veneration,

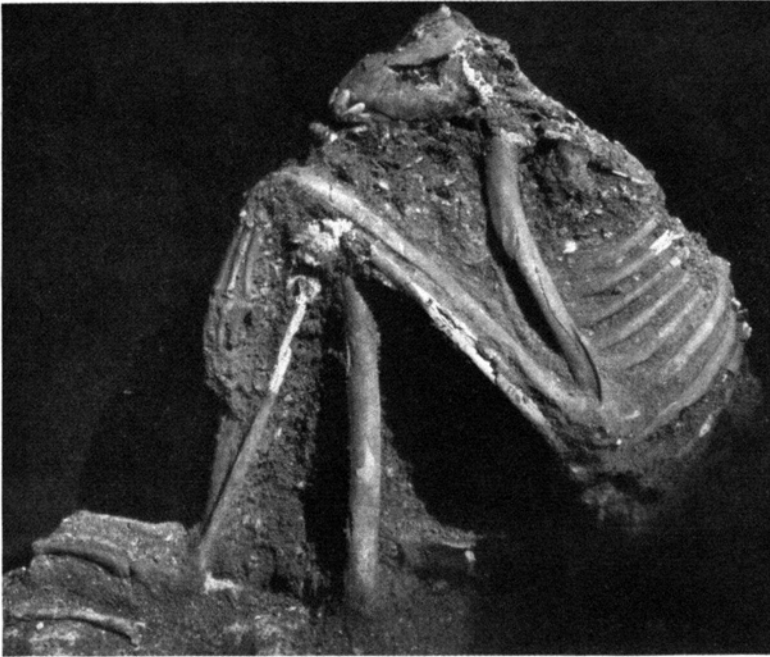


FIG. 26.—Pet monkey buried beside his mistress in a tomb probably of the Ptolemaic period.

though regular services performed by a priesthood of its own had probably ceased. Numerous demotic scrawls on the walls and roof record the visits of pilgrims.

A greatly altered picture is presented in Roman times. The *sebba-khin* have left us very few traces of the Roman level. Wherever it is still present we have found private houses, though often nothing but the foundations remains. In fact, in the southeastern part of the area these foundations lie directly above the *fellahin* village of the 22d–24th dynasties and are separated from it only by a deep layer of loose

earth which probably came from the destroyed Great Girdle Wall. The age of this level was disclosed in part by ostraka bearing regnal dates of Roman emperors.

The character of this Roman town becomes clearer toward the east, outside the former Great Girdle Wall, where a tree-bordered avenue 12 meters wide led along the stone Outer Wall. A stone gateway erected by Tiberius Claudius (Fig. 27) forms the entrance to this street from the south. Beyond it was a town area which we have systematically

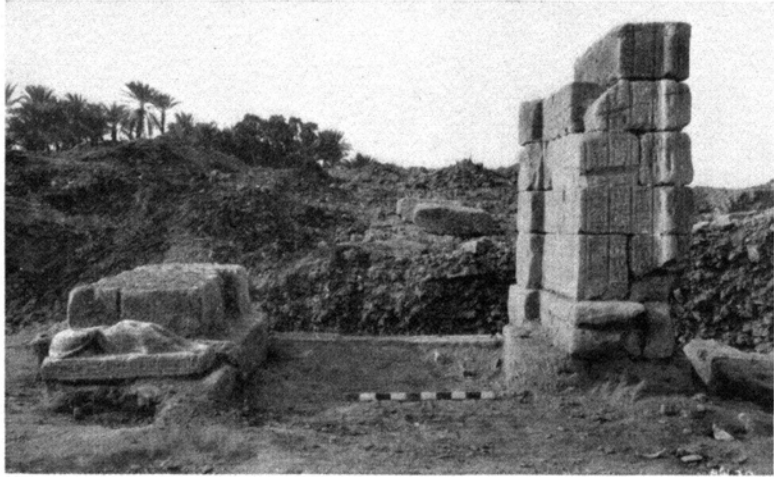


FIG. 27.—Gateway of Tiberius Claudius at the southeast corner of Medinet Habu.

cleared and investigated. The Roman houses there stood in three superimposed levels, dating from the first to the fourth century after Christ; and above them were Coptic houses. The Roman houses, especially those of the second period (about the time of Hadrian and Antoninus Pius), were large and stately (Fig. 28). Thick walls and careful building technique distinguished them. It was a surprise to find in three of these houses hot baths (*Laconica*) equipped with hypocausts (e.g., Fig. 29) such as are found in the Roman villas of colder regions and particularly in the public baths. In Medinet Habu also there was a rather large, perhaps public, bath, which was practically destroyed, however, when a Coptic church was erected above it.

In this relatively splendid period of Roman occupation the Small

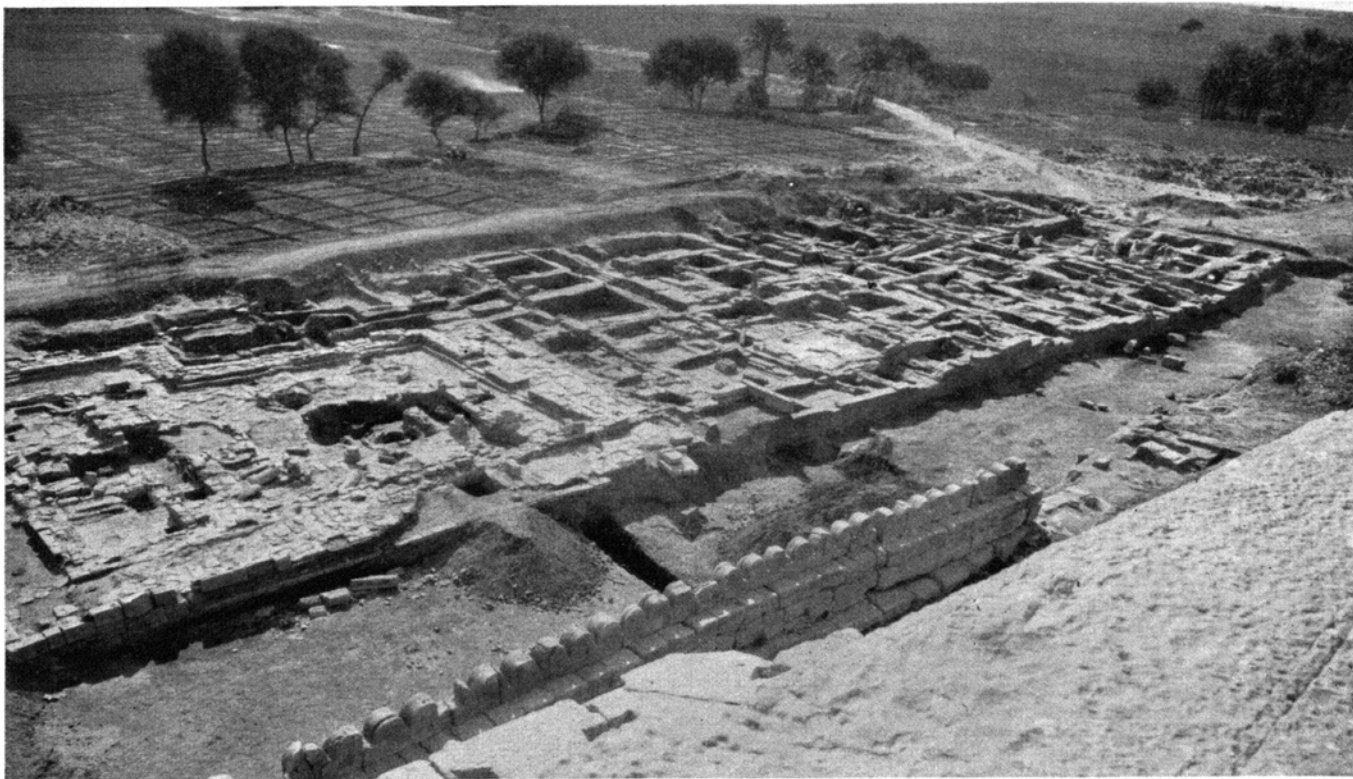


FIG. 28.—Roman houses and a small Coptic church east of Medinet Habu

Temple received a last extension under Antoninus Pius (about A.D. 150). This emperor began the construction of an eight-columned vestibule and a square forecourt in front of the Ptolemaic pylon, but neither of them was completed.<sup>1</sup>

The emperor Domitian (about A.D. 90) laid out a street behind the Small Temple in line with its axis and constructed a gateway (Fig. 30) beside the great pylon of the temple of Ramses III, where we succeeded in finding its foundations. The stones of this gateway were found built



FIG. 29.—Private bathroom in a Roman house at Medinet Habu

into Coptic houses when the Egyptian government cleared the area about forty years ago, and were re-erected on a site arbitrarily selected by Daressy.

The decline of the country both politically and economically is mirrored in the circumstance that it was once more necessary to fortify Medinet Habu (cf. Fig. 20). New walls with strong towers at the corners were built over the fallen walls of Ramses. It was the time when the nomad Blemmyes from Nubia made numerous marauding expeditions into Upper Egypt and held its inhabitants in constant dread. Hundreds of bone arrowheads found at the foot of the town

<sup>1</sup> See *OIC* No. 10, p. 68.



FIG. 30.—Gateway of Domitian

wall may have been sped from the bows of such invaders during some foray against the fortified town.

The houses erected during the last of the three Roman periods were, without exception, very meagerly equipped and yielded practically no objects of value. Of coins, almost nothing but small change was found, such as possessed value only in bags containing large quantities. Yet among them was one great rarity, a gold coin of the Emperor Heraclius (A.D. 610-41), that is, of the time immediately before the Arab conquest.

The last Roman period fades without sharp distinction into the Coptic, that is, the Christian age.<sup>1</sup> With the ninth century, life appears to have ceased at Medinet Habu. Since then the town has lain desolate and forsaken, probably by decree of the Arab conquerors.

Herewith ends the story of Medinet Habu as excavation has revealed it. Of course, only a few scenes from the drama of Egyptian history have unfolded themselves on this little stage; but they present a realistic view of the fateful changes and the tragic destinies that have attended the Egyptians in their later centuries.

<sup>1</sup> Discussed in detail in *OIC* No. 10.

## THE TEMPLE OF EYE AND HARMHAB

Medinet Habu spread during Roman and Coptic times toward the north as well as the east beyond the former Ramses inclosure. Isolated ruins of houses still stand preserved to a considerable height, while foundations of others can be traced among the heaps of rubbish. Farther to the west occur vaulted tombs which in recent times have been ransacked anew by the natives. We have already referred to our conclusion that the irregularity in the plan of the comparatively late Great Girdle Wall of Ramses III (Fig. 1) pointed to the presence of an earlier temple which had to be taken into account when Ramses set out to enlarge his own area. Numerous fragments of sandstone suggested that we had to deal with a mortuary temple of some importance.

In order to answer this question, we dug a trial trench 3 meters in width, beginning at the northwest corner of the area and extending 120 meters northward. Building remains of three different periods were brought to light. Uppermost was a late Roman cemetery, under which was revealed a destroyed mortuary temple which proved to be that of King Eye (about 1350 B.C.). This in turn had at certain points replaced private buildings dating, therefore, from before the end of the 18th dynasty.

In order to estimate the size of the temple, a second trial trench was dug 100 meters to the east of, and parallel with, the first. After some groping this actually struck the brick pylon of the temple, which proved to be about 60 meters long, that is, only slightly smaller than the 65-meter stone pylon of Ramses III. In contrast to the latter, however, the new pylon, of which only a few layers have survived, consists of unbaked bricks stamped with the name of Eye.

Our investigations had shown us by this time that the excavation of the newly discovered temple would be a much more extensive task than we had expected. It was necessary to make a new application to the Department of Antiquities in order to have the limits of our concession extended 150 meters north and west of Ramses' Great Girdle Wall. Our northern limit now extends to the southern border of the French concession. Since by the time the concession had been ar-

ranged for, the season was nearing its end, actual excavation of the Eye temple was postponed to 1931/32. What we learned in the trial excavation is, however, of such importance that we include a discussion of it in this preliminary report.

The Roman cemetery is situated on a rise of ground surrounded by old watercourses. In the center are domed tombs 3-4 meters square (Fig. 31). They were originally sunk 2-3 meters under ground with only their domes protruding above the surface. Such a tomb was accessible from outside by means of a vertical shaft, at the bottom of

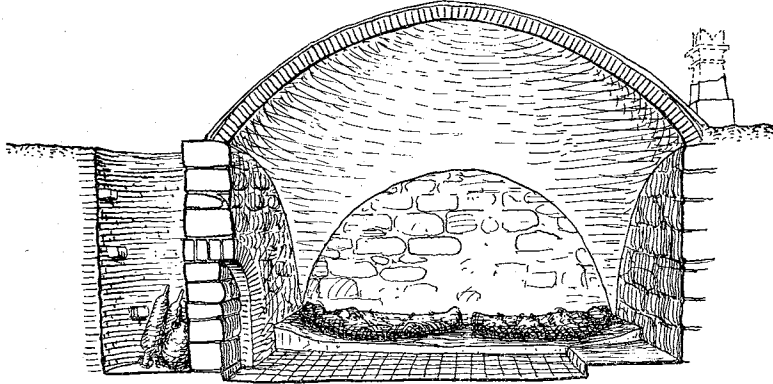


Fig. 31.—Section through a domed tomb of the 3d or 4th century after Christ

which a low doorway formed the entrance. In these shafts were often found amphoras and other pots which at the time of the funeral ceremony had contained wine or water. They were usually inverted; in one, still sealed with the customary mud stopper, was a branch of laurel(?) the purpose of which was to spice the wine. After the burial the tomb shaft was filled with sand or rubbish. In two cases we found the square pedestals of stone or mud brick monuments which were originally placed aboveground in front of the domed roof of the tomb. Unfortunately, the upper portions have perished.

In each tomb regularly lay one or more mummified bodies, stretched out along the wall, usually without coffins or funerary gifts. In many cases a low bench of stone or mortar with a slightly raised head end provided a bed for the mummy. Occasionally there were two or three such benches, as in general the tombs were occupied by several bodies. Without exception we found the tombs robbed, the mummies dese-



crated and in confusion, while often tombs were heaped with destroyed mummies towered one upon another, probably secondary burials which had been disturbed by robbers.

On the whole the mummification of the bodies was crude; but practically every mummy wore on its breast a wooden label inscribed with the name of the deceased and usually with the age at death. By this means each body could be identified after mummification and safely delivered for burial in its proper tomb.

The best of these mummies were wrapped in various layers of linen coated with clay which was then neatly modeled and painted. For

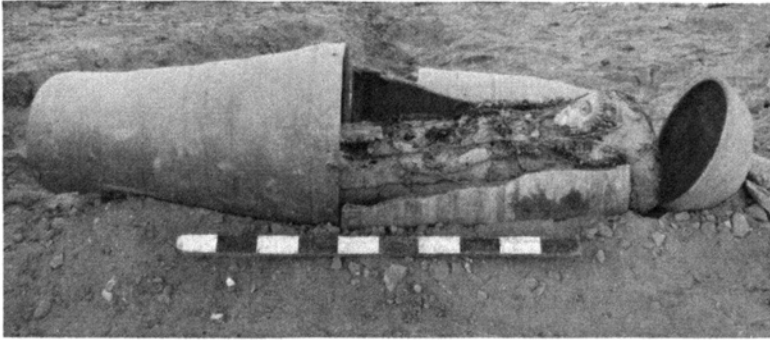


FIG. 32.—Pottery sarcophagus of the Roman period, partly opened; inside, a mummified woman with stucco mask, garlands, etc.

example, the head was decorated with wreaths of flowers; the hands, generously provided with finger rings, usually held bouquets; and the breasts and feet were daintily formed. At burial the bodies had been adorned with fresh leaves and flowers. Other mummies were wrapped in a coarser grade of linen, gaily painted in Byzantine style with figures of the ancient gods and scenes from the cult of the dead. Still humbler burials lay at the edges of the hummock and also scattered among the domed tombs. They were placed in crude coffins of baked or unbaked clay (Fig. 32); the mummies themselves scarcely differ from those described above. Several were undisturbed when found (Fig. 33); the wreaths, dates, and nuts which had been included as funerary gifts were still intact.

The date of the cemetery is established by the wooden mummy labels mentioned above, one of which contains a reference to the sec-

ond year of the emperor Probus (A.D. 278). Corroboration was found in a coin of Constantine (324-37). The dead who slept in this cemetery must have been the inhabitants of the Roman town which has been described.

We are particularly interested in the Eye temple because it helps to fill the gap in our knowledge of the mortuary temples of the Empire from the temple of Hatshepsut to those of the 19th dynasty. For as yet little is known about the temples of the Thutmosids down to the time of Amenhotep III. The only possible exception is the temple of Thutmose IV, the remains of which perhaps offer a general idea. We



FIG. 33.—Mummy of a man after opening the wrappings

therefore eagerly await the message of the Eye temple, for it is certain to reveal the architectural conceptions which were brought back from Tell el-Amarna at the restoration of the cult of Amon and his associates in Thebes.

We cannot yet answer numerous questions which have arisen, for it is evident that the temple of Eye was practically demolished by use as a stone quarry. Fortunately, however, numerous fragments of columns and other pieces of stone lie about which have excellently preserved the reliefs and colored decoration.

Wherever a cartouche has been preserved, the name of Eye has been erased and replaced by that of his successor Harmhab. In but a single instance had it been overlooked and no change made. Thus the temple, which Eye had begun and finished, at least in the rear rooms with their fine paintings, was usurped by his successor and was thenceforth known as the temple of Harmhab. Seals on stoppers of wine jars from the temple magazines read: "Wine for the temple of Harmhab."

Above all, the usurper had replaced his predecessor's name on the statues which stood in the temple, two of which, portrait figures of a

king in standing posture, we unearthed in the ruins (one in Fig. 34). They measure about 3.50 meters in height and are constructed of reddish quartzite from Gebel Silsileh, the same material which was used for the Colossi of Memnon. The predominating color of the statues is red—body, necklace, skirt, dagger, and belt. The king's headdress has yellow and blue stripes, the uraeus is blue and red, the eyes are black and white, while the hieroglyphs of the king's name in the cartouche are filled with blue. It is thus obvious that the painting was not intended to be realistic but only to emphasize certain details in color variation. In order to retain the original color impression, we made a water color reproduction immediately after discovery.

The name which formerly stood under that of Harmhab is difficult to decipher, but various signs prove undeniably that it was the name of Tutenkhamon, the son-in-law of Ikhnaton and predecessor of Eye. After his early death Eye provided for him a rich burial in the Valley of the Kings. The statues prepared for Tutenkhamon's temple were pre-empted for that of one or another of his successors, but they betray unmistakably the immature features of the youthful Tutenkhamon, whose portrait is now so well known to the world.

Numerous hard white limestone fragments of other statues were found. One of these pieces, from a throne, bears a cartouche which had originally contained the name of Eye, indicating that this statue at least had been made for the builder of the temple. Written with ink upon several of these statue fragments are hieratic inscriptions. A three-line inscription (Fig. 35) on a shoulder reads, according to Dr. Rudolf Anthes: "Year 27, first month of summer, 9th day, the day of the entering-in of Harmhab, alive, prosperous, and healthy, beloved of Amon, who hates his enemies(?) and loves . . . ." The year 27 need not refer to the twenty-seventh year after Harmhab's accession to the throne, but was evidently reckoned from the death of Amenhotep III, as whose legitimate successor Harmhab regarded himself.<sup>1</sup> For that reason he ignored the reigns of the heretic king Ikhnaton and his co-regent Semenkhkhere, as well as those of Tutenkhamon and Eye. How long these kings reigned is not certain. The highest date recorded

<sup>1</sup> The year 59 of Harmhab is mentioned in the inscription of Mes. It is, nevertheless, quite certain that he could not have ruled for fifty-nine or more years. The dating must have been reckoned from the death of Amenhotep III. Cf. A. H. Gardiner, *The Inscription of Mes* (in Sethe, "Untersuchungen" IV [1905]) pp. 52 and 22; V. Loret, "La grande inscription de Mes à Saqqarah," *Zeitschrift für äg. Sprache* XXXIX (1901) 10 and 4.



FIG. 34.—Large statue of Tutenkhamon in transport

in the reign of Ikhnaton is the year 18; in that of Tutenkhamon, the year 6; in that of Eye, the year 4. This would indicate that Ikhnaton's reign lasted at least more than seventeen years; Tutenkhamon's, more than five; and Eye's more than three. Adding an average of one-half year each for the uncompleted years of these reigns, we obtain some

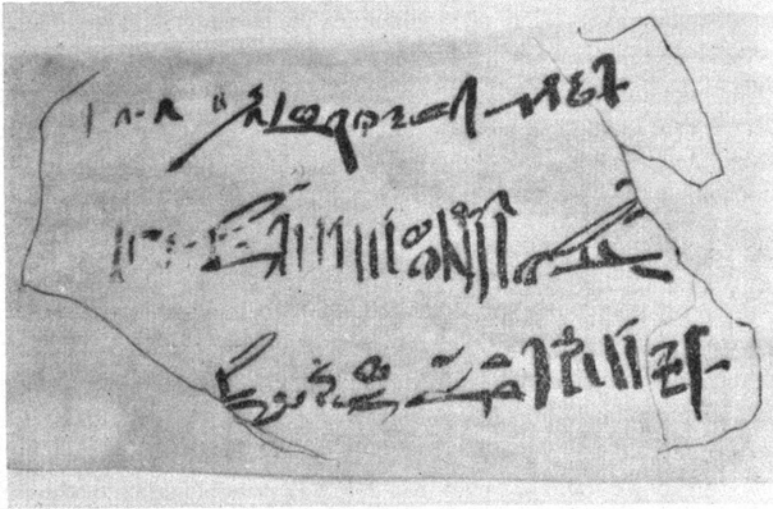


FIG. 35.—Hieratic inscription referring to the reign of Harmhab

twenty-six and one-half years. It is evident, then, that Harmhab could not have come to the throne earlier than the twenty-seventh year after the death of Amenhotep III.

The words "the entering-in of Harmhab" signify without doubt his first entry into the temple, which until then had belonged to Eye; in other words, they refer to its usurpation by Harmhab. In short, on the ninth day of the first summer month in the twenty-seventh year after the death of Amenhotep III, Harmhab actually entered Thebes as king and took personal possession of his hated predecessor's temple. Thus from this small inscription we have verified the duration of the reigns of the last kings of the 18th dynasty.

It is not for the excavator to delve more deeply into these historical questions. The reader may, nevertheless, gather from the foregoing report with what hopes we face the excavation of the temple of Eye and Harmhab, and what it promises to reveal.

## THE RAMESSEUM

As a result of *sebakh*-digging, which has unfortunately wrought considerable destruction at Medinet Habu, there were several architectural details there which could not be clearly understood. It thus seemed desirable to study the corresponding features in the near-by Ramesseum, which obviously had served as a model for Medinet Habu. As is well known, though the Ramesseum has been cleared for a long time, it has not yet been thoroughly investigated from an architectural point of view.

Our gratitude is due to the Egyptian Department of Antiquities, which most generously granted permission to make the requisite excavation. A force of forty men and eighty boys worked from January 20 until February 28, 1931; in the next four weeks we made our survey. The responsibility for these operations was intrusted to Herr Hans Steckeweh.

Naturally we could not pursue in detail all possible problems in such a cursory investigation of the gigantic temple area. We resisted the temptation to measure anew the exposed portions of the imposing temple of Ramses II and confined our efforts to those portions at rear and sides where its plan was not clear. Furthermore, we paid no special attention to the later structures in and around the magazines, but sought only to recover the original plan at the time of Ramses II.

We began by excavating the foundation walls of the palace. Next we investigated the small temple that adjoins the great one of Ramses II on the north and found it to be a temple of Seti I. Then the foundation trenches of the wholly destroyed temple rooms to the side and rear were cleared; and finally the magazines were investigated. The new plan of the Ramesseum which is presented in Figure 36 is based, but with noticeable corrections, upon that of the Theban necropolis 1:1000 which was made by the Survey Department of the Egyptian government in collaboration with the Department of Antiquities.

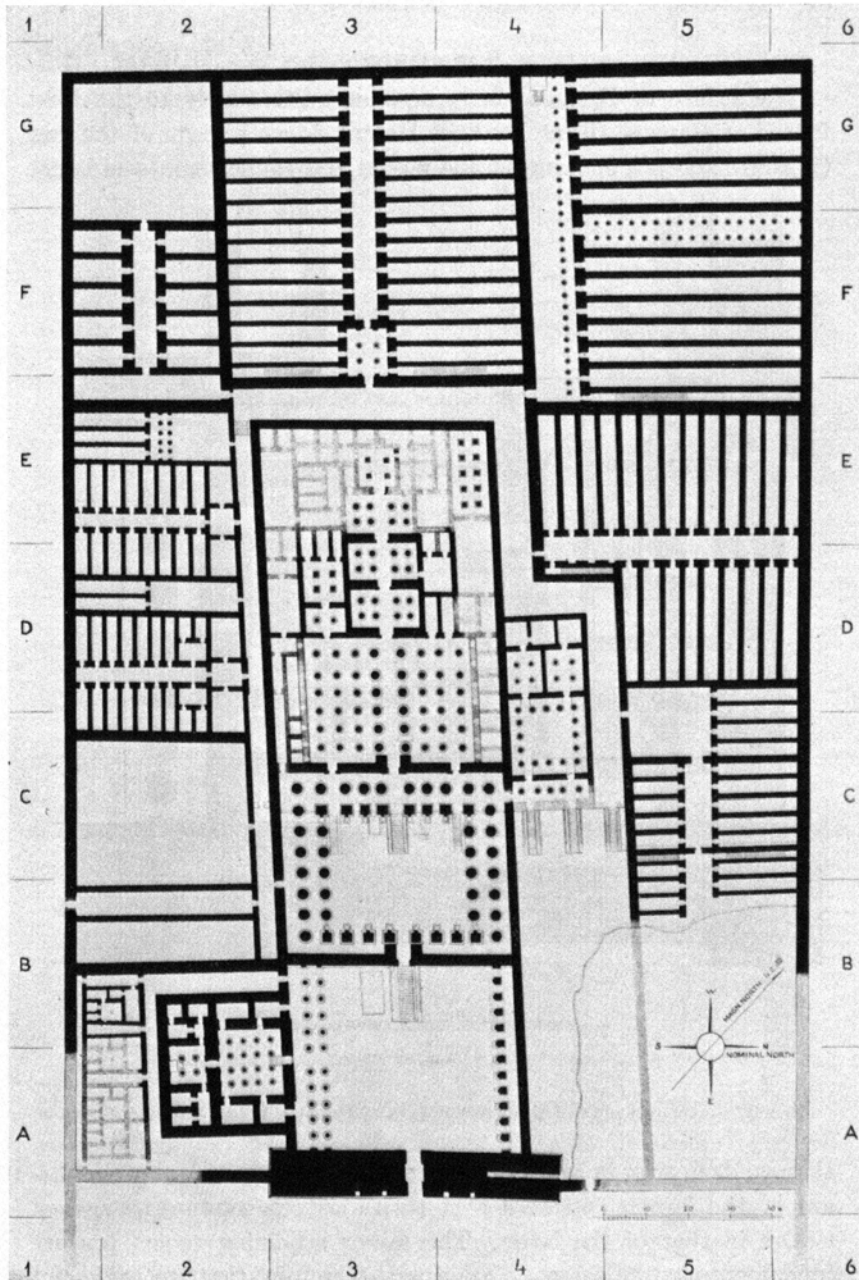


FIG. 36.—Ground plan of the Ramesseum



## THE PALACE

The palace of Ramses II corresponds quite closely to the First Palace of Ramses III at Medinet Habu.<sup>1</sup> A comparison of the two (Figs. 37 and 38) shows that the one at the Ramesseum was larger

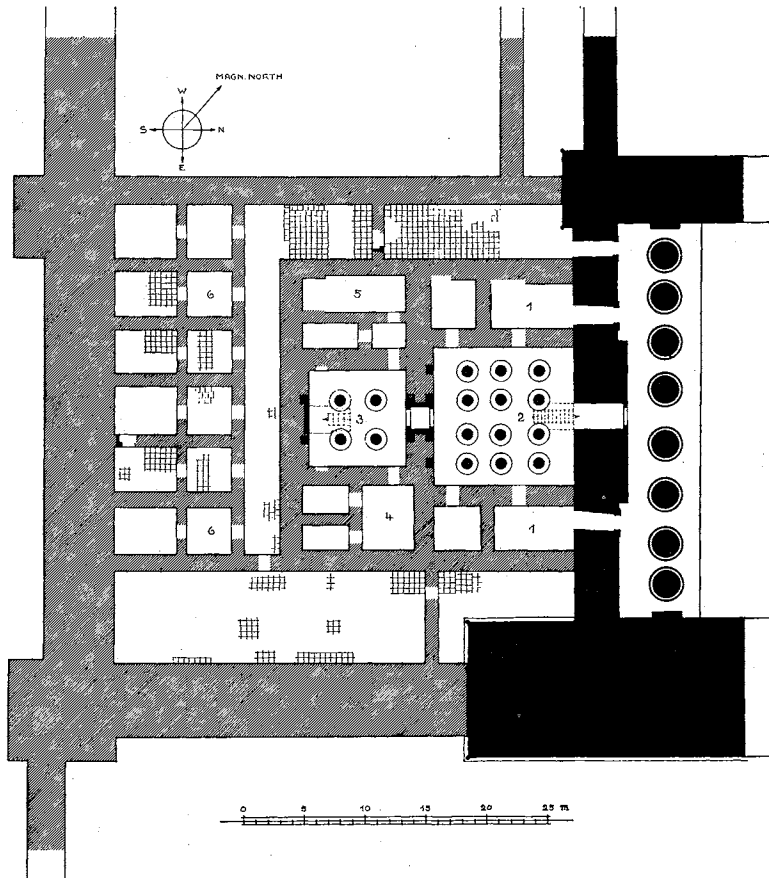


FIG. 37.—Ground plan of the First Palace of Ramses III at Medinet Habu

than, and superior in workmanship to, that at Medinet Habu. For example, the former possessed a hall with sixteen columns as against twelve in that of the latter. The minor adjoining rooms too are fundamentally the same. It appeared, therefore, that we could not

<sup>1</sup> See *OIC* No. 5, pp. 40-45.



go far astray in using the ground plan of one palace as a guide in supplying the missing parts of the other. The Ramesseum palace provides new light on the following points: (1) The lowest two steps behind the Window of Royal Appearances are still in place and indicate that the

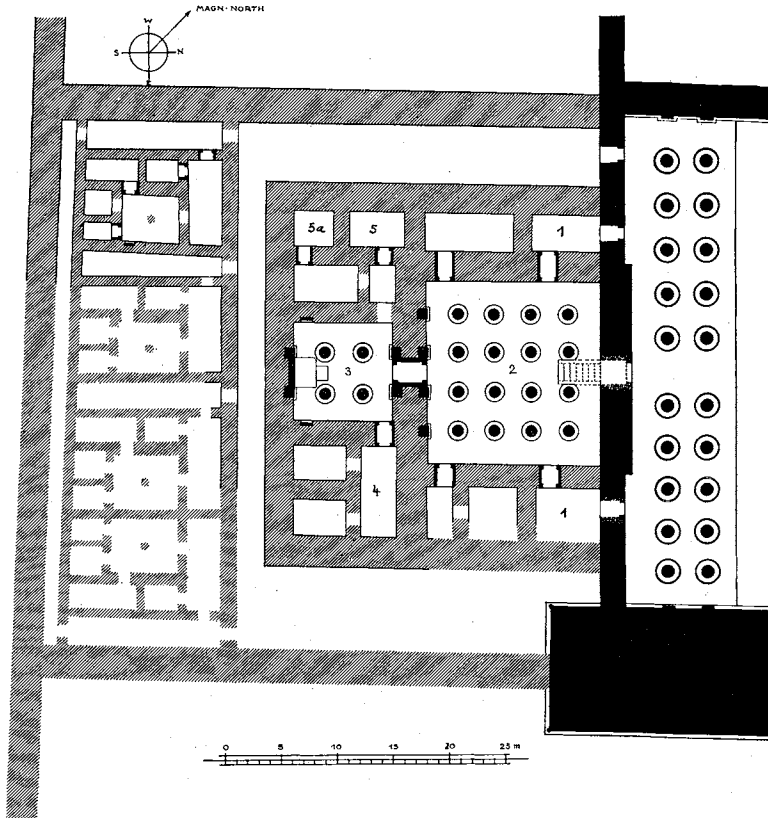


FIG. 38.—Ground plan of the palace of Ramses II at the Ramesseum

stairway led straight up to the raised Window, just as it has been reconstructed at Medinet Habu. (2) Two small rooms (Fig. 38, Nos. 5 and 5a) were found in the position corresponding to what we had reconstructed at Medinet Habu as a single room, a royal bed-chamber with its characteristic niche for the bed. Our reconstruction, then, is offered only tentatively, especially since the foundations at this spot were badly destroyed. (3) The rooms behind the palace

proper differ considerably from those at Medinet Habu. In the latter case we discovered two rows of six rectangular rooms each, the use of which is not completely certain. At the Ramesseum, on the other hand, the corresponding space was occupied by ordinary dwellings. It was possible to clear only one end of the row, as the remainder lay under a private garden; but our excavation sufficed to reconstruct the whole complex, which consisted of four dwellings with intervening passages. Each house included a wide entrance hall, behind which lay first a large square room and then two small chambers—in short, the typical elements of an Egyptian dwelling. The buildings were separated from the girdle wall by a narrow passage. These apartments undoubtedly belonged to members of the royal household, perhaps princes or high officials. They cannot be considered harem dwellings, such as were found in the corresponding place in the Second Palace of Ramses III at Medinet Habu (cf. Fig. 12), for they lack both a hall and a court for the harem, and there are no adjacent living and sleeping apartments for the king.

#### THE SMALL TEMPLE OF SETI I

Though the palace does not present much that is new, the columned structure on the north side of the temple (Fig. 39; cf. Fig. 36, C-D 4) is of the very greatest importance for the understanding of the Ramesseum. At this point, until recently, there were noticeable only a few column bases, without the slightest traces of walls or other building remains to explain their purpose or meaning. Our excavation not only revealed that these bases were the remains of a temple but also that they concealed another one beneath. In the latter a foundation deposit *in situ* at its northwest corner (Fig. 40) bore the name of Seti I, father of Ramses II. The lower temple is therefore older than the Ramesseum. The later structure, to which the column bases belong, is a reconstruction or restoration of the earlier temple and belongs to the building period of the Ramesseum. At the southwest corner, where the small temple adjoins the Ramesseum, we discovered the remains of a foundation deposit of Ramses II (Fig. 41), part of which had been removed years ago at the time of the original excavation.

The later temple has two parallel axes. Two stately stairways lead up to a great transverse hall with columns. Behind it lies an open

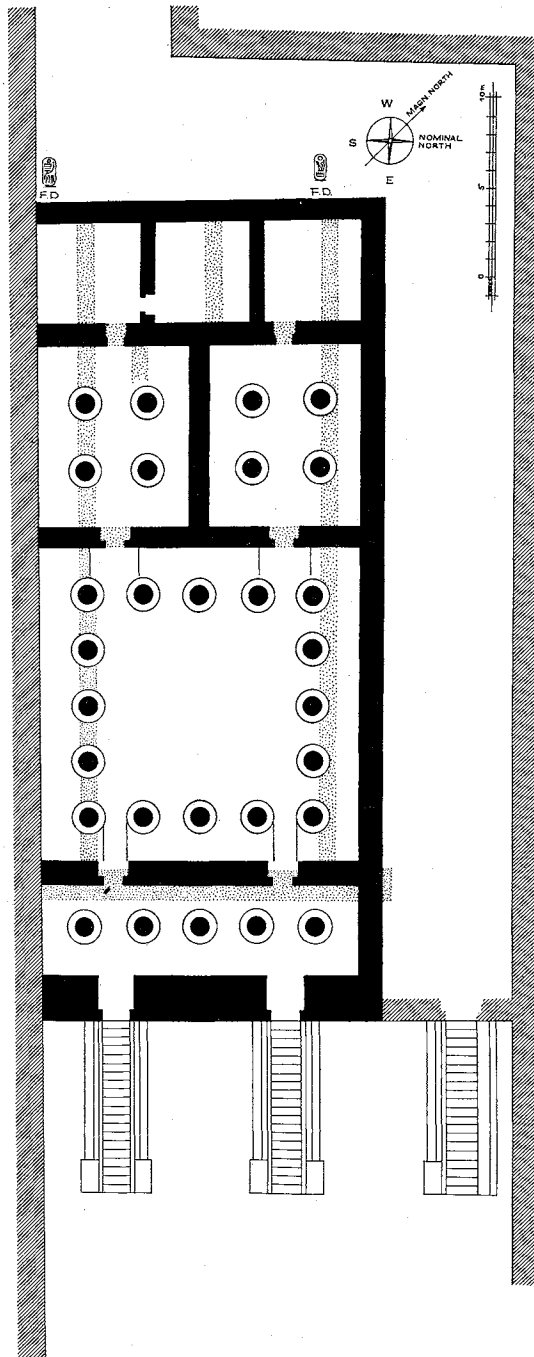


FIG. 39.—Ground plan of the small temple of Seti I at the Ramesseum



FIG. 40.—Foundation deposit of Seti I *in situ*



FIG. 41.—Foundation deposit of Ramses II, found at the southwest corner of the small temple of Seti I.

colonnaded court, with two square hypostyle halls beyond. In the rear are three chapels of equal size, two apparently dedicated to one god and the third to another.

Of the older temple we found only a few of the foundation trenches, from which one sees that the columned halls were narrower and that there were two sanctuaries of unequal width. This earlier building fundamentally resembled the later one. It is not known to what divinities the small temple of Seti I was dedicated. That it had a considerable influence on the arrangement of the Ramesseum is still to be observed in the irregularity of the latter's ground plan.

#### THE TEMPLE OF RAMSES II

Though the Ramesseum area (Fig. 36) is nearly rectangular, the axis of the temple proper which lies within it is noticeably oblique, so that every court and hall of the temple is askew. This irregularity is naturally more obvious on a plan than in reality. Discovery of the reason back of it would evidently explain the history of the temple area.

It may be assumed that at first the area had been staked out as a rectangle between the neighboring 18th dynasty temples of Prince Wazmose and King Amenhotep II. Perhaps the original plan had been to remove the temple of Seti I; work to that end may even have been started. At that stage perhaps an order was issued to spare, or even to reconstruct, the small temple after the completion of the Ramesseum. At any rate the great temple was built adjoining the small one; and thus it came about that the temple of Ramses II, like the small one of Seti I, lies diagonally within the area.

The resemblance of the Ramesseum (Fig. 36) to the temple of Ramses III at Medinet Habu (Fig. 1) is limited to the original group of buildings within the Inner Inclosure Wall. Possibly the Ramesseum also had an outer court on the east with an entrance gateway or pylon and a canal and quay. But, if so, their remains must now lie concealed under the cultivated fields and thus out of the range of our investigation. As far as our certain knowledge goes, the Ramesseum begins with its great stone pylon.

The principal rooms of the temple of Ramses II correspond to those which are well known at Medinet Habu: a first court (Fig. 36, A-B 3-4), beside which is situated the palace (A-B 2); a second court (B-C

3-4); the great hypostyle hall (C-D 3-4); the second, third, and fourth hypostyle halls (D-E 3); the square sanctuary of Amon, with its pedestal for the sacred bark, and some small rear rooms which were probably its treasuries; and finally, beside the sanctuary of Amon, several small chapels of various divinities.

The rooms beside the central halls of the Ramesseum are different from those at Medinet Habu. On each side of the great hypostyle hall at the Ramesseum there was a narrow row of rooms which now are completely destroyed. On the north side were seven chapels (C-D 4) opening upon a common ramp. The sixth of these chapels certainly had contained a sacred bark, for the passage between the columns which formed the approach to it is wider than the others, exactly as at Medinet Habu. The corresponding rooms on the south (C-D 3) form an even narrower row, as space was left for a corridor behind them. They also may have been small chapels. Doubt remains concerning the long room which may be seen on the plan. I prefer to assume, admittedly without definite evidence, that a number of cross walls divided it also into separate chapels.

Behind the great hypostyle hall were five series of rooms. The central series contains the smaller hypostyle halls already mentioned. At each side of them lay small sanctuaries. That on the south was a small but complete temple, with a two-columned anteroom and a hall with four pillars, behind which were three cellas. That a bark had stood in the middle cella is suggested by the fact that there is an axial approach to it through the great hypostyle hall from a special ramp and doorway in the second court. By comparison with the temple of Seti I at Kurna, where the corresponding sanctuary is devoted to the builder's father Ramses I, we may conclude that this sanctuary was in like manner designed for the cult of Ramses II's father Seti I. On the north side of the second hypostyle hall (D 3) were two long, narrow chapels. Behind them two cellas faced a small open court connected with the third hypostyle hall.

The arrangement of the rooms at the extreme south (D 3)—court, transverse hall, and two cellas—suggests their use as another chapel. This was connected with the second court of the temple by the corridor already mentioned. At the extreme north side (D-E 4) lay a long,

narrow sanctuary consisting of some entrance rooms, a court, and a hall with ten pillars. So far as we know, all the other royal temples on the west side of Thebes have in this position a sanctuary dedicated to Re-Harakhte; in some there is even an altar preserved in the center of the court. It is therefore safe to assume that this group of rooms likewise was reserved for the cult of that great sun-god. South of the pillared hall there had been in all probability a stairway leading to the flat roof, where special cult activities must have taken place.

The treasures appear to have been located in the southwest corner of the temple (E 3); but unfortunately it is now impossible to recognize the relationships of the various rooms, as no door sills were located in the foundation trenches.

In the final publication of Medinet Habu I hope to discuss in detail the ground plan of the Ramesseum and to compare it with other royal temples,<sup>1</sup> especially that of Ramses III.

#### THE MAGAZINES

The entire area around the great temple, with the exception of the palace and the small temple of Seti I, was covered with extensive magazines designed to house the temple supplies. They greatly resemble similar but much smaller buildings at Medinet Habu.

The broad paved street, 8 meters in width, that leads to them begins in the court (A-C 4-5) north of the great temple and winds around the small temple of Seti I to the southwest corner of the Ramses temple. Thence it continues as a narrower passage along the south wall of the temple to the royal palace, near which (B 1-2) a probably later walk gives access to a gateway in the girdle wall.

The individual magazines were arranged arbitrarily and irregularly, not only because of the obliquity of the great temple and the presence of the small temple of Seti I, but also because the magazines were constructed at various times as need arose. Certain architectural peculiarities lead to the assumption that the complex originally ended immediately behind the rear wall of the temple. At any rate, the three large magazines which lie behind the temple (F-G 1-6) were relatively late additions, and even they were not all constructed at the same time. Of these, the central one was built first. It was exceptionally

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the plan in Petrie, *Six Temples at Thebes* (London, 1897), Pl. XXII.

imposing, having a stately four-columned entrance hall in which the administrative officials probably performed their duties. The hall opens into a presumably vaulted middle corridor along which similarly constructed storerooms are arranged on both sides. Steps just inside the front wall lead directly to the vaulted roof. Up them slaves once carried endless sacks of grain to be poured into the rooms beneath through openings provided for the purpose at regular intervals of about 6 meters.

A somewhat larger magazine occupies the corner to the north (F-G 5). The entrance to a broad street before it is somewhat crowded in between the older buildings. At the far end of the street rises a stone dais upon which, under a canopy, the chief administrative official, or possibly at times the king himself, sat to inspect the supplies and treasures of the temple. From this street the colonnaded front of the magazine presents an impressive view. In the center opens a long columned hall which may have served as headquarters for officials and scribes and perhaps also contained records and other valuables. The adjoining storerooms are each about 50 meters long by 4 meters wide and would have contained an enormous quantity of grain.

The magazine in the southwest corner (F-G 1-2) was obviously designed for supplies of a different character. Its vaults are almost 5 meters wide but comparatively low. There appear to have been no stairways to the roof. The inner walls are covered to the height of 1 meter with thin stone slabs. Behind the building is a fairly large court in which activities probably connected with the contents of the magazine took place under the open sky.

Of the older magazines, a very extensive granary north of the temple (D-E 4-5) is perhaps the oldest in the entire district. Those east of it, however (B-C 5), are small and poorly constructed. The same may also be said of the two magazines south of the temple (D-E 1-2), the entrances to which are somewhat elaborately equipped with small stone pylons. Two small groups of rooms adjoining may be designated as administration buildings. One, consisting of a court and three small rooms (E 2), even possesses an entrance hall with eight columns. The other (D 2) has only two rooms behind its court. Between the magazines and the palace is a great open court (B-C 2) which in all probability was once occupied by buildings. There may have been



another magazine here or even a well, as at Medinet Habu; but our trial excavation revealed no traces of masonry.

This short résumé of the plan of the Ramesseum is sufficient for our present purpose. Further differences between the great temples of Ramses II and Ramses III, due primarily to the subsequent expansion and fortresslike character of the latter, we shall discuss in detail later.

